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MICHELANGELO  
Unknown: Uffizi

IN AND OUT OF  
F L O R E N C E

A NEW INTRODUCTION  
TO A WELL-KNOWN CITY

BY

MAX VERNON

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WITH MANY ILLUSTRATIONS FROM DRAWINGS BY  
MAUD LANKTREE  
AND FROM PHOTOGRAPHS



NEW YORK  
HENRY HOLT AND COMPANY  
1910



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*Published May, 1910*

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*To My Wife*

MY GUIDE IN SEEING AND TELLING





## PREFATORY NOTE

THIS is a sort of guide-book or introduction to Florence, both for those who actually are coming or have come to it, and for those who can come only in the spirit. And it tells something about Florence and the Florentines of to-day as well as about those glorious people of the earlier centuries.

Finally, it tells also something of how one may become for oneself with least trouble and expense and most advantage and interest temporarily a Florentine. Or at least it describes how this was really done, to the unreckonable great joy of the doers, not only through their days in Florence, but for what promises to be all of their days of memory hereafter.

M. V.

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# CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
I. IN FLORENCE AND HOUSE-HUNTING . . . .	I
II. OUR VILLA . . . . .	15
III. SERVANTS, MARKETING, AND HOUSEKEEPING . . . .	30
IV. OUR GARDEN . . . . .	49
V. OUR VILLAGE . . . . .	61
VI. BEGINNING TO SEE FLORENCE: PIAZZA DEL DUOMO . .	73
VII. THE CHURCHES: THE SMALL ONES . . . . .	90
VIII. THE CHURCHES ( <i>continued</i> ): THE LARGER ONES . .	98
IX. THE GALLERIES: THE UFFIZI . . . . .	113
X. THE GALLERIES ( <i>continued</i> ): THE PITTI AND ACCA- DEMA . . . . .	127
XI. CASTLES AND PALACES: PALAZZO VECCHIO AND IL BARGELLO . . . . .	138
XII. CASTLES AND PALACES ( <i>continued</i> ): THE PALACES . .	153
XIII. STRAY PICTURES ON MONASTERY WALLS . . . . .	167
XIV. THE SCULPTORS FROM THE HILL-SIDE QUARRIES . . .	184
XV. OUTSIDE THE WALLS: FEUDAL CASTLES AND FIESOLE . .	200
XVI. OUTSIDE THE WALLS ( <i>continued</i> ): SAN MINIATO, CERTOSA, IMPRUNETA, SIGNA, AND MALMANTILE . .	215
XVII. THE STREETS: YESTERDAY AND TO-DAY . . . . .	236
XVIII. FLORENTINE SHOPS AND SHOPPING . . . . .	258
XIX. HARVEST TIMES . . . . .	269



CHAPTER	PAGE
XX. FLORENTINE EXCURSIONS:	
I. Vallambrosa and over the Consuma Pass	286
II. In the Casentino . . . . .	297
III. Prato and Pistoja . . . . .	315
IV. Lucca . . . . .	330
V. Pisa . . . . .	340
XXI. BOOKS ABOUT FLORENCE . . . . .	348
INDEX . . . . .	365

# LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

## I. DRAWINGS

	PAGE
"Other times our way was across crowded, fascinating Ponte Vecchio" . . . . .	6
Antonetta, the flower woman. ( <i>After a photograph by the Author</i> ) . . . . .	9
"That last remaining stretch of old Florence bordering the water's edge" . . . . .	13
"The other side of the house gives on the garden terrace and is adorned by balconies and a profusion of climbing vines." ( <i>After a photograph by the Author</i> ) . . . . .	22
"The huge red <i>brocca</i> on the housetop." ( <i>After a photograph by the Author</i> ) . . . . .	27
"In little intimate groups are changing companies of potted plants." ( <i>After a photograph by the Author</i> ) . . . . .	53
"An angled stone stair leads down to the lower garden." ( <i>After a photograph by the Author</i> ) . . . . .	56
"It seems to be, in May, wholly a garden of irises." ( <i>After a photograph by the Author</i> ) . . . . .	57
"They have their oxen fair in June." ( <i>After a photograph by the Author</i> ) . . . . .	64
"A most useful village fountain where all day long women and children fill their straw-covered <i>fiaschi</i> and exchange the gossip of the day" . . . . .	66
The church of the <i>frati</i> Olivetani at Settignano . . . . .	70
The Duomo and Campanile . . . . .	78
Santa Maria Novella, "the great Dominican church that still dominates the now almost deserted piazza" . . . . .	103
The cloisters of Santa Maria Novella . . . . .	107
"Michelozzo's beautiful little court with its winsome laughing boy of Verrocchio spurring water over his dolphin playmate" . . . . .	140
"The noble Loggia dei Lanzi with its strenuous statues" . . . . .	144
"The Bargello is the ancient palace and stronghold of the podestàs and chiefs of police of Florence" . . . . .	146
"That most fascinating room of all, the Bargello, that unroofed room of the arcades, the well, the stair, and the <i>stemmi</i> -spotted walls" . . . . .	151

	PAGE
In the Boboli Gardens . . . . .	156
Boboli Cypresses . . . . .	157
A corner lantern of the Palazzo Strozzi . . . . .	159
Palazzo Spini . . . . .	161
The cloisters of San Marco . . . . .	176
"The prior's cell of Savonarola, with its few most intimate relics" . . . . .	180
San Niccolò, one of the "few noble gate towers of ancient days" . . . . .	201
"Up the hill toward Vincigliata." ( <i>After a photograph by the Author</i> ) . . . . .	202
The gate tower of Vincigliata . . . . .	203
"The tower of Castel di Poggio still stands in its full height and strength." ( <i>After a photograph by the Author</i> ) . . . . .	205
Castel di Poggio. ( <i>After a photograph by the Author</i> ) . . . . .	207
The Duomo of Fiesole and ruins of Roman Amphitheater . . . . .	209
"Starting from the Porta Romana at the beginning of the road to Rome" . . . . .	216
The Certosa, "seated nobly on a beautiful hill overlooking a laughing valley" . . . . .	223
Certosa has a "beautiful cloister garden, with a fascinating stone well in its middle" . . . . .	224
"Slow, white oxen were hauling the bigonie and casks to the wine-sheds." ( <i>After a photograph by the Author</i> ) . . . . .	227
"A cabbage bed, with beautiful great pottery vases set about in it." ( <i>After a photograph by the Author</i> ) . . . . .	230
A torch socket on a palace wall . . . . .	237
Giovanni da Bologna's "devil of the Mercato Vecchio" . . . . .	241
"The Mercato Nuovo where the big bronze boar keeps guard" . . . . .	242
Housetops and chimney-pots. ( <i>After a photograph by the Author</i> ) . . . . .	245
"Everywhere the six balls of the Medici appear" . . . . .	256
On the Ponte Vecchio . . . . .	265
"The men seize the wisps one at a time and beat their grain- filled ends violently against the <i>aja</i> floor or against a stone bench or block, until most of the grains have flown out." ( <i>After a photograph by the Author</i> ) . . . . .	272
A <i>podere</i> well. ( <i>After a photograph by the Author</i> ) . . . . .	274
"The relics of Romena" . . . . .	294
"The Casentino vines are trained to grow on <i>pioppi</i> , small trees pruned to have low, broad, thick heads." ( <i>After a photograph by the Author</i> ) . . . . .	296
"Facing our garden gate was the great brown block of a castle (Poppi) with its high square tower." ( <i>After a photograph by the Author</i> ) . . . . .	298



# List of Illustrations

xi

	PAGE
The entrance to Poppi Castle. ( <i>After a photograph by the Author</i> ) . . . . .	299
A street fountain in Stia . . . . .	300
The gate tower of Poppi Castle. ( <i>After a photograph by the Author</i> ) . . . . .	301
The court of Poppi Castle, "though much smaller, is comparable in beauty and rough grace with that of the Florentine Bargello" . . . . .	303
"The angling stair and pillared rail, the <i>stemmi</i> on the walls and open balcony" of the court of Poppi Castle . . . . .	304
"Past contadinos' houses all hung over with drying gold and orange corn." ( <i>After a photograph by the Author</i> ) . . . . .	305
Camaldoli in its forest . . . . .	309
"St. Francis's famous monastery, set aloft in mountain cliffs and forest" . . . . .	311
The old well at La Verna. ( <i>After a photograph by the Author</i> ) . . . . .	312
A climbing path at La Verna. ( <i>After a photograph by the Author</i> ) . . . . .	314
A bit of Tuscan countryside. ( <i>After a photograph by the Author</i> ) . . . . .	318
The patched walls of the ancient Palazzo Pretorio . . . . .	320
"The pulpit is partly Michelozzo's, according to authority, but the reliefs must certainly be Donatello's own" . . . . .	322
"The striking, column-laden long façade of San Giovanni Fuorcivitas" . . . . .	324
"Vasari's imposing dome and a lantern on Madonna dell' Umilta" . . . . .	325
The Duomo of Pistoja . . . . .	326
"The Duomo is one of a group of interesting structures facing on an open piazza whose most conspicuous feature is the high square campanile, or Torre del Podestà" . . . . .	327
The inclosed court of the Palazzo Pretorio . . . . .	328
"Until finally the host of flat-topped square towers of Lucca came into sight" . . . . .	332
"How fit it is that this old-world place should be completely inclosed by low bastioned walls, with dry moat without, and broad, grassy, tree-grown bank within" . . . . .	333
The Duomo and Campanile of Lucca . . . . .	335
San Michele in Lucca . . . . .	338

## II. PHOTOGRAPHS

MICHELANGELO. <i>Unknown</i> : Uffizi . . . . .	<i>Frontispiece</i>
PONTE SANTA TRINITÀ . . . . .	8
IRON GATE IN WALL NEAR D'ANNUNZIO'S VILLA . . . . .	17

	PAGE
SETTIGNANO ROAD THROUGH OLIVE ORCHARDS . . . . .	20
BEPPI AND THE WATER PAILS . . . . .	32
THE CYPRESSES OF VILLA GAMBERAIA . . . . .	68
CYPRESSES ON SETTIGNANO HILL ABOVE VAL D'ARNO . . . . .	71
SINGING BOYS. <i>Luca della Robbia</i> : Duomo Museum . . . . .	83
VIRGIN AND ST. BENEDICT. <i>Filippino Lippi</i> : Badia . . . . .	91
DETAIL OF ALTAR. <i>Benedetto da Rovezzano</i> : Santa Trinità . . . . .	93
PULPIT. <i>Benedetto da Maiano</i> : Santa Croce . . . . .	98
DETAIL OF THE PULPIT. <i>Benedetto da Maiano</i> : Santa Croce . . . . .	100
DEATH OF ST. FRANCIS. <i>Giotto</i> : Santa Croce . . . . .	102
ALTAR IN THE CHAPEL OF THE SACRAMENT. <i>Desiderio da Settignano</i> : San Lorenzo . . . . .	109
TOMB MONUMENT OF LORENZO DE' MEDICI. <i>Michelangelo</i> : San Lorenzo . . . . .	111
THE BIRTH OF VENUS. <i>Botticelli</i> : Uffizi . . . . .	114
VIRGIN AND CHILD. <i>Filippo Lippi</i> : Uffizi . . . . .	118
VIRGIN, CHILD, ST. JOHN, AND ST. ANTHONY. <i>Titian</i> : Uffizi . . . . .	120
ADORATION OF THE MAGI. <i>Botticelli</i> : Uffizi . . . . .	124
THE CONCERT. <i>Giorgione</i> : Pitti . . . . .	127
THE GRANDUCA MADONNA. <i>Raphael</i> : Pitti . . . . .	129
POPE LEO X AND CARDINALS GIULIO DE' MEDICI AND LUIGI DE' ROSSI. <i>Raphael</i> : Pitti . . . . .	131
THE ADORATION. <i>D. Ghirlandajo</i> : Accademia . . . . .	133
SPRING. <i>Botticelli</i> : Accademia . . . . .	135
THE DEPOSITION. <i>Fra Angelico</i> : Accademia . . . . .	137
THE VIRGIN AND CHILD. <i>Michelangelo</i> : Bargello . . . . .	147
NICCOLÒ DA UZZANO. <i>Donatello</i> : Bargello . . . . .	149
MADONNA WITH CHILD. <i>Luca della Robbia</i> : Bargello . . . . .	151
LORENZO DE' MEDICI AS ONE OF THE MAGI. <i>Benozzo Gozzoli</i> : Palazzo Riccardi . . . . .	157
THE LAST SUPPER. <i>Andrea del Castagno</i> : Santa Appollonia . . . . .	172
THE ANNUNCIATION. <i>Fra Angelico</i> : San Marco . . . . .	179
THE CRUCIFIXION. <i>Perugino</i> : S. Maria Maddalena dei Pazzi . . . . .	182
TOMB MONUMENT OF CARLO MARZUPPINI. <i>Desiderio da Settignano</i> : Santa Croce . . . . .	185
DETAIL OF THE TOMB MONUMENT OF CARLO MARZUPPINI. <i>Desiderio da Settignano</i> : Santa Croce . . . . .	187
DETAIL OF THE TOMB MONUMENT OF CARLO MARZUPPINI. <i>Desiderio da Settignano</i> : Santa Croce . . . . .	189
TOMB MONUMENT OF LEONARDO BRUNI. <i>Bernardo Rossellino</i> : Santa Croce . . . . .	191
ALTAR. <i>Mino da Fiesole</i> : Sant' Ambrogio . . . . .	193
TOMB MONUMENT OF UGO, MARCHESE DI TOSCANA. <i>Mino da Fiesole</i> : Badia . . . . .	195
DOOR OF THE SALA DELL' OROLOGIA. <i>Benedetto da Maiano</i> : Palazzo Vecchio . . . . .	197

# List of Illustrations

xiii

	PAGE
ALTAR. <i>Benedetto da Rovezzano</i> : Santa Trinità . . . . .	199
TOMB MONUMENT OF BISHOP LEONARDO SALUTATI. <i>Mino da</i> <i>Fiesole</i> : Duomo of Fiesole . . . . .	211
ALTAR WITH VIRGIN AND SAINTS IN ADORATION. <i>Mino da</i> <i>Fiesole</i> : Duomo of Fiesole . . . . .	213
FLORENCE FROM THE VIALE DEI COLLI . . . . .	217
TOMB MONUMENT OF CARDINAL JACOB OF PORTUGAL. <i>Antonio</i> <i>Rossellino</i> : San Miniato . . . . .	220
MALMANTILE (15th Century) . . . . .	234
DETAIL OF TOMB MONUMENT OF CINO DE' SINIBALDI. <i>Cellino</i> <i>di Nese</i> : Duomo at Pistoja . . . . .	327
TOMB OF ILARIA DEL CARRETTO. <i>Jacopo delle Quercia</i> : Duomo of Lucca . . . . .	334
DUOMO, LEANING TOWER, AND BAPTISTRY AT PISA . . . . .	343



## CHAPTER I

### IN FLORENCE AND HOUSE-HUNTING

ONE may well be disposed to risk much for one's first glimpse of Florence, but hardly a wife. And Rowena's symptoms, violent and astounding ever since passing Prato, had become of a sudden truly alarming. When finally she lunged far out over the drop glass in the compartment door and with a manner of Columbus discovering America, cried out, "Florence!" I could no longer restrain myself, but frantically clutched both hands full of skirt and dragged back for dear life. Also I wanted a turn at looking out myself.

It is not the lifting dome of Brunelleschi that one sees first on approaching Florence, as it is Michelangelo's great egg of St. Peter's that is first descried on the road to Rome. It is rather the egregiously re-made Galileo tower thrusting itself heavily skyward from Arcetri hill. It was this sad reminder of Florentine decadence, this sacred relic sold by the city to a restoration-mad collector and seller of antiquities, that gave Rowena the signal to cry, "Florence!"

"Florence! And the magnificence and passionate agitation of Italy's prime sends its fragrance towards us like a blossom-laden bough." Florence, Mecca

of that sect of believers, persistent even in these breathless days of machines and money-madness, the believers in the reality of the ideal. Florence, reliquary, holding such choice treasures of the *beati* of art and poetry that hundreds of thousands come to press their reverent lips to its surface. Florence, adorned, inlaid, canopied cradle of the noblest of the family of creative man reborn. "Why be astonished," asks reverent Hopital, "by the magic that Florence exercises on cultivated spirits? It attracts them by all that captivates the imagination, appeals to the intelligence, makes palpitate the heart. Its history is a little world where the greatest interests of earth have contended, where all the passions of man have burned. Its science and literature have moved all there is of good and bad in us; and finally its art is, if not the most perfect, at least the most intellectual and most immaterial, and that which gives our thinking faculties the most powerful stimulus."

From Nature's majesty in Switzerland and her rippling, glinting beauty at Bellagio; from the enchantment of Venice fairyland, and the soft luxury of earth's brown lap in Arno valley, one comes well-attuned to Florence and eager to see and feel her achievement of spirit and genius. Even on one visiting her for the first time and guiltless of any knowledge of her beyond a vague idea of the eminent rôle she has played in the eternal human tragedy, Florence makes from the first an ineffaceable impression. She is an old city, this City of the Lily, but she still lives in all her grace of form and color. She is like a flower, some one has said, which, when fully blown,



instead of withering on its stalk, turned as it were into stone. And she is such a concentration of the achieved things of the spirit, such a materialization of inspired visions put into enduring form and color; she is so immediately revealing and satisfying! In Rome one sightsees through the centuries; in Venice, one dreams in a color-shifting fairyland made musical by moving water; in Florence one lives in the Italy that gave the world a new life. One merges into the very atmosphere of inspiration; one becomes as much of a poet and artist as he ever can be.

But one cannot live on wonder and inspiration alone. Even John in the desert land had his locusts and wild honey. The pilgrim arriving in Florence, the goal of his longings and hopes; this pilgrim, climbing out of the express from Bologna, has first of everything to face the sordid earthly considerations of a place to lay his head and food to fill his mouth.

A hotel for a few days, a pension for a few weeks, a house or apartment for a few months. We were for months and a house. But most arrivals are for days or weeks. The hotels most frequented are those along the Arno, especially those that stretch along the north bank from the Ponte Santa Trinità to the Piazza Manin. The best hotels are here, with others good but cheaper. And in the same general region are many pensions. But when a city is completely run to pensions, as Florence is, no quarter will hold them all. There are many desirable ones out in the clean new quarter around the English cemetery; perhaps it will be less disconcerting to say around the Piazza Dona-

## 4 In Florence and House-Hunting

tello. The artistic and the literary rather gather here.

It is a common belief that the hotels and pensions on the other side of the Arno are cheaper, and perhaps, the pensions anyway, as good. So, if you are willing to walk across a bridge for most of your sightseeing you may save a *lira* a day. And who is not willing to walk across a city bridge?

Bridges of London! bridges of Paris! bridges of Florence! Fascinating, unique Ponte Vecchio! Graceful Santa Trinità! Historic alle Grazie! What time you will waste in crossing these bridges! You will come too late to the church with the frescoed chapel; it has just closed for midday. You will miss the tram for Fiesole; ten minutes of waiting. You will get to your pension tardy for the table-d'hôte; the soup, never hot, will now not even be warm.

But what this lost time will have won! Sometimes we loitered on alle Grazie to hang over the railing and look north to the Fiesole and Settignano hills with their wondrous colors of twilight as the sun slanted across their climbing villages, their clustered villas, their silver-gray slopes of olive. And we mused, as we loitered, over a history of seven centuries, for the piers and arches under our feet were built in 1237. Originally called Rubaconte in honor of the Podestà of Florence at the time of its building, the bridge gets its present name from a tabernacle of the Madonna delle Grazie which was in the little church that used to stand at one end of it. About fifty years after the building of the bridge occurred the greatest historical event in its memory: the cele-

bration of the ephemeral peace between the Guelphs and Ghibellines arranged by Pope Gregory X on his journey through Florence to the Council of Lyons.

“At the end of July, 1273, the Florentines assembled on the banks of the Arno, which at this point broadened into a sort of lake, to witness the Pope, who, followed by his Court and accompanied by King Charles of Naples and the Emperor Baldwin of Constantinople with their imposing retinues, appeared on the middle of the bridge, blessed the crowd, and obliged the opposing parties to kiss and embrace, subsequently ending the ceremonies of the day by laying the cornerstone of the church called San Gregorio della Pace.

“The impression produced by the magnificence of this solemn function and the manner in which it took place remained for a long time; and the church of Saint Gregory of Peace existed for many centuries, even to our own time. But the peace which it was intended to commemorate lasted exactly four days, after which Florence again became divided by the quarrels and fights of the Guelph and Ghibelline factions, and Pope Gregory, discouraged and mortified, left the city.”—CAROCCI.

Through several centuries the bridge carried numerous little houses built on its piers. These included six little chapels, three small convents, and several picturesque birdcage-like houses, in one of which lived Benedetto Menzini, a satirical poet of much reputation in the seventeenth century. In one of the con-

## 6 In Florence and House-Hunting

vents were "confined for education, from choice or political motives, princesses of some great Italian families. Among them were the celebrated Caterina Sforza, who died there, Caterina and Eleonora Cybo di Messa, Lelia Orsini di Pitigliano, and the unfortunate Camilla Martelli, wife of Cosimo I dei Medici."

Other times our way was across crowded, fascinating Ponte Vecchio. It was on this bridge that Cosimo



"Other times our way was across crowded, fascinating Ponte Vecchio."

dei Medici found Camilla Martelli, his unfortunate wife, who soon got shut up in the convent on alle Grazie. And it was at the south end that Ariosto lived for half a century in the Hospice of the Knights of Malta. And there occurred the murder of young Buondelmonte, that set off the long cruel struggle of the Whites and the Blacks.

But it will be Ponte Vecchio's interest of to-day that will overpower most of us; the solid rows on either side, except for a short way in the middle, of little houses in which the Florentine goldsmiths and jewel workers, disciples of Cellini, contrive and dis-

play their wares. The fascination of those little shops; the seizing scenery of those windows; the enticing ways of these politest of present-day Florentines! There is a current rumor that wherever in Florence you may get false wares under fair names, here on the old bridge there is honor among—jewelers. What is called ruby is not “reconstructed”; what is declared emerald is not “doublette.” Let us believe it. And such delicate manipulation of gold and silver; such revealing display of the blandishment of precious stones and pearl, of coral and colored glass, will not often elsewhere come under one’s eye.

In the little open space in the middle of the bridge we may turn our eyes from the glitter of jewels to the fascinations of the sliding river, the distant hills, the guarding walls of old buildings that follow its banks. Here there is set a bust of the patron saint of all the inhabitants of the bridge, Benvenuto Cellini, that swaggering master-jeweler and master-wit of the olden days. If one would see Cellini as goldsmith instead of sculptor, he should spend an hour or two in that lower room in the Pitti Palace where are the golden cups, finger basins, and the dinner service of the Medici.

Just under Cellini’s bust there occasionally sits an old woman with a tray of little wooden cages too small for birds, but which house, nevertheless, a lively lot of musicians. They are singing crickets. Like the Japanese, the Italians have killed many of their wild songbirds and supplement their field music with that from cages. Perhaps it was from this need



## 8 In Florence and House-Hunting

that came the inspiration of one of the Ponte Vecchio wonder-workers to devise the glittering marvel of bird-song shown us one day.

It was a bejeweled casket which when opened let spring up a tiny bird figure, resplendently draped in fragments of humming-birds' feathers, and pouring forth from vibrating beak and bobbing head a clear and liquid little song. We let our curiosity even go the length of asking the price of this toy. And then we watched with awe-struck eyes as the gemmy thing was put carefully back into the steel safe.

Finally, the Ponte Santa Trinità, the beautiful bridge, with its perfectly satisfying curve and line. Seen from the Ponte Vecchio, from Lung' Arno Acciajuoli or Guicciardini, or from the roadway winding down from San Miniato to Porta San Niccolò, it proves in how simple a thing, just a curve, just a group of lines, genius can show itself.

Whenever we crossed it we bought a few flowers from Antonetta, the lavender woman. You can see in her face the beauty she once had. Four years ago, Rowena knew her a beautiful woman. She added to the workingman husband's wages the *soldi* got from selling flowers. And there were many soldi; for she was so joyous and smiling, so polite and friendly, that all who often crossed the bridge knew her. The tourists kodaked her and she was *the* flower woman of Florence.

Then the husband died, and the soldi for flowers and from the kodaking tourists were all there were for her and the two children; one a crippled girl,





Photo. Author

PONTE SANTA TRINITÀ



the other a hunchback son. Her face took on a look of seriousness. So the tourists stopped kodaking her. Then the girl cripple fell into a wasting, lingering illness. The flower woman had to stay at home much of the time to care for her, and the regular patrons turned to other vendors. Then the little girl died and she could again give all her time to flower-selling. But it was too late to gather her patrons again; and she had lost her old place in the line at the supply gardens. So she gave up bouquets and fresh roses and carnations and began to sell lavender. Then the hunchback boy, who had always earned a few soldi, dropped one day into the cloudy waters of the river that ran under the bridge.



Antonetta, the flower woman.

Antonetta's face to-day is no longer beautiful; her joyousness is gone. She lives in a *stanzaccio* that costs her ten dollars a year for rent. She eats—what does she eat? And she pays this rent and for that which she eats by selling lavender, sometimes flowers; “*elle meurt de l’hiver en offrant le printemps.*” In

four years so much has happened, all of it bad, and she is trying, perhaps, when she stands unnoticed, to solve the problem of a God who is all-kind and a life that seems all unkindness.

Whether you choose your hotel or pension on this side or that side of the river, one thing you will find out speedily. That is, that the estimate of prices given you before leaving home by the friend who spent a month in Florence four or five years ago will have to be revised. The pensions are in this year, 1909, at least one lira a day more expensive than they were in 1904, and by another five years they will likely have added another lira to the tariff. Still, one can live to-day very comfortably and decently in good Florence pensions for five lire (one dollar) a day, and in better ones, of course, for six or seven or eight lire. The hotels make pension rates from nine to twelve to fourteen lire a day.

If you live long in any pension, however good, you will still have need of knowing where you can get a good cup of coffee or chocolate with *biscotti*; or perhaps a glass of German beer with a club sandwich. The restaurants and cafés of Florence are not such attractive or admirable places as those of Rome or Venice or Milan. Where, indeed, in any European city will one find a better café than the Nazionale in Rome, or a more attractive one than Florian's on St. Mark's? But with Giacosa's and Doney's restaurants on the Via Tornabuoni, the more Bohemian Lapi's and Paoli's tucked away in their side streets, and the Gambrinus and Reininghaus cafés on the Piazza Vittorio Emanuele, Florence can very well

help out one's pension fare by anything from an ice to a dinner. And to pick and choose, plate in hand, before the open case of varied and wonderful *pasti* in a bakery like Luigi Gilli's, is a special kind of joy that comes only next to the successful running down of an out-of-the-way Botticelli.

If one likes seeing a touch of Bohemia, or what seems to be that, as he seeks his five-o'clock rest and refreshment, he can take an outside seat at the Reininghaus, more familiarly called Jacquetta Rossa, or Red Jacket, by reason of the golf jackets affected by the waiters. Here gather most of the pallid faces with burning bright eyes, the long hair, the unusual hats and clothes, and the speakers of ultra-foreign tongues, that Florence has to exhibit. Art students and musicians, poets and near-poets, anarchists plotting for the woe of monarchs and the weal of the proletariat, make this their picturesque rendezvous.

The thing about any European café in good situation, that is, on a public square or populous streets, that makes it worth more than its merely material refreshment to the tourist, is, of course, the revelation it makes of the native people and their visitors. Idling at a café table on the sidewalk with eyes open is to assist at the unrolling of a panorama of the life of a foreign folk. The faces and dress, the speech and gesture, the wit or stupidities, the customs and behavior of all sorts and conditions of people are revealed with the winking swiftness and staccato emphasis of a cinematograph.

Perhaps you are not in Florence for days or weeks, but for months. Then you will want as we did, not

a hotel or even a pension, but housekeeping apartments, or better, a villa beyond the barriers. To satisfy this need one must inquire, inquire. Ask of all acquaintances, of all Florentines you come into speaking contact with, of pension mistresses, of shopkeepers, of your barber and your banker. And, of course, go to the agents. Their names are in the Florence *Herald*, the English newspaper of the Anglo-American colony. Also there are always advertisements in this paper of apartments and villas to let. Take tram rides and walking trips about town and out of town, watching for the "to let" signs. And somehow, finally, there will turn up just what is wanted.

There are always some apartments to be had along the Arno, and if one's stay is not to run into late summer or early fall, they are, if for no other reason than the view, perhaps the most desirable. Friends of ours have a dainty set of rooms on the top floor of a building on Lung' Arno Acciajuoli. From their little balcony—I should pay the whole rent of the suite for that balcony and one sleeping room!—what incomparable seeing! Straight down, the green Arno, with its bridges, a skiff here and there, perhaps a pair of white four-oar shells with crews in bright-colored jerseys. Across, that last remaining stretch of old Florence bordering the water's edge. Everywhere else along the river the old houses have been torn down and the Lung' Arno promenades built in. It is a fascinating block of angular, irregular, small-windowed, towering soiled whitish and yellow walls, behind which the little furnaces of the silversmiths



are roaring and scores of bare-armed, deft-fingered workmen are hammering and beating, drawing out and twisting the shining silver strands in a haze of heat and smoke. And then looking up the river into the face of San Miniato del Monte and on beyond and above to the hills, and finally to the mountain crests by Vallombrosa; and the other way down the river with Bellosguardo and Oliveto for near background and the high Carrara in the far distance.



“That last remaining stretch of old Florence bordering the water’s edge.”

Think of the lights of morning and evening on the pictures in this gallery!

But better than three or five rooms in town is a house of one’s own with a garden and a pony stable; a villa on a hill-slope above Florence, in a plantation of olive and vine. And so we set out in search for a villa. The little rest of this chapter is the tale of Rowena’s success. For she did the searching and she found the villa.

There were villas too large and too expensive; others too small, and one for a song; just the taxes

apparently, but with drawbacks, of course. Finally, and sooner than you would think, the exactly right one appeared. The discovery was by a friend; the consummation by an agent. The business details were an agreement to rent for at least three months and payment in advance for the rent for these months; the necessity of taking on the gardener attached to the place and paying his wages at an already fixed rate; the assisting at the making of, and the signed agreement to, an inventory of all the household furnishings; the waiving of any furnishings in the way of linen and table silver (these we had to rent specially), and the waiving of any rights to the vegetables or fruits that the garden might produce unless from seeds of our own planting, but a recognition of our rights to all the flowers. We might, I presume, have picked all the pear blossoms, but we could not pick the pears if we let the flowers stay on the trees!

To all these matters we agreed; paid our three months' rent with a commission to the agent—it seems the lessee and not the lessor pays the commission over here—and faced the business of finding servants and establishing ourselves.

## CHAPTER II

### OUR VILLA

MRS. ROSS, the active authoress who has compiled a voluminous red book called "Florentine Villas," as well as another about Florentine palaces, catalogues twenty-three really and truly villas of the castle or palace type that inhabit the hilltops and slopes girdling Florence. All these approved villas, with perhaps one or two exceptions, date from the fifteenth century or earlier, and in their histories the names of emperors, popes, and cardinals stand out in imposing relief. Hardly less conspicuous, and much more familiar and enhancing, are the names of many of the poets and painters whose memories and priceless bequests of song and picture and marble make Florence the magic city she is. That the present owners of these villas are mostly Englishmen and Germans of less conspicuous claims to fame only tells of the decadence of Italy, and need detract not the least from the abiding interest of the storied palaces.

But these twenty-three villas are in truth but a tithe of the reality. There are hosts of others, less princely in their proportions, perhaps, and more uncertain in their fragrance of fame, but none the less beautiful and not infrequently of most interesting

association. Their gleaming white and pink walls rise well above the olive orchards and vineyards that cover all the hill-slopes and valley floor about Florence. There are literally hundreds of them, each with its own beauty of scene and setting, its own vagaries of tower or crenelated wall, *loggia* or carved buttress.

And each sits in a garden; whether on hilltop or dropping slope or in the flat-floored valley, there is always the lush growth of tree and shrub and bedded plants; the garden of walks and arbors, terraces and bowers; of quaint bits of stone stairway and wall, fountains and grotto pools. And hardly one that does not rear beside its cool white walls a group, a row, perhaps only a pair, of dark steeple-like cypresses. As we stand on the roof-terrace of our house and let our eyes range the miles of girdling hill-slopes about the nestling city, these countless white villa spots, with their guarding sentinel black cypresses, dot the whole landscape.

I have said that many of the uncatalogued villas have their associations interesting or dear to the visitor in Florence. It is very true. Not a giant's stone's throw from our own perching home on Settignano hill-side is a modest gray stone house with square battlement tower which once belonged to the Buonarrotti family, and where the great Michelangelo himself "drew in with his foster-mother's milk the mallet and chisel with which he afterward carved his statues." For this nurse mother was the daughter of a stone-cutter. On the floor of this villa the boy Michel drew his first picture.



Photo, Author

IRON GATE IN WALL NEAR D'ANNUNZIO'S VILLA





Indeed, we neighbor abundantly with distinction. A few rods further down the hill-side from the old Buonarotti house is the former country home of Eleonora Duse, with its quiet inclosed garden sweet with roses. It was her fancy to have only roses in the garden and clambering up the rough walls to her deep-set windows. In one of these stood a tall vase with a single white rose whenever the *maestra* was in residence. What a pretty conceit for a house flag! The house is low and rambling, looking rather like an unusually large *contadino's* house than the more pretentious villa. In its door-post is cut "La Porzuincola."

A high-walled narrow roadway, dropping deviously down the hill, runs by the house and is opened on by the broad front doors. Just across the roadway from these doors is a beautiful small iron gate let into the stone wall of the adjoining *podere* (farm), with a bright-colored little Holy Mary set into the heavy stone cross-piece above the gate. On the *podere* side of the gate is cut "*Pensa!*" This *podere* is leased by Gabriele d'Annunzio, and in his absence is mostly given over to a horde of pampered dogs of a dozen breeds. They have their own *cuoco* and *cameriere* (cook and waiter), says our Beppi, and Beppi knows. He knows the household intimacies of every home on Settignano hill, as does every Settignanese, of course. On the posts of the great iron gate that guards the dark tree-grown garden of the establishment of dogs and literature are cut "*Noli me tangere*"—this under the bell-pull—and "*Cave Canes ac Dominum*"—on the other post. There

seems to be a breath of irreverence in the genius of Italian literary decadence!

A strong contrast of association is furnished by the very next house in the same podere with d'Annunzio's establishment. This is the Villa Viviani, a high, square, pink-walled affair overlooking Florence and facing Fiesole and the rugged Apuan Alps in the distant west. It was in this villa that Mark Twain finished "Pudd'nhead Wilson," that best, because most human thing of his, and wrote in its preface: "Given under my hand this 2d day of January, 1893, at the Villa Viviani, village of Settignano, three miles back from Florence on the hills; the same certainly affording the most charming view to be found on this planet and with it the most dream-like and enchanting sunsets to be found on any planet or even in any solar system."

If we do not tramp the hill-slopes for distinguished villas, but stay at home and sit on our roof-terrace under the shadow of the big red-brown water *brocca* that holds our *acqua da bagna*, and gives our villa its name, still we find no end of sights to thrill us.

Along the curve of the hill-ring toward Fiesole our eyes follow over soft gray olives and tall close-robed somber cypresses to houses where history inhabits; where picture and poetry germed and blossomed; houses resonant with memories of great men and women.

There with its crenelated skyline is the very house where Boccaccio's gay youths and ladies *amorse* told their tales of love, while the death chants of the black-cowled Misericordia rose dolorous from plague-

struck Florence below. And just beyond is a cypress-guarded villa that belonged to the great Medici themselves: a house in which poets and painters lived with those extraordinary patrons of the arts, those merchant princes whose life was for so long the very life of Florence.

Among these older houses are newer ones with their names of more modern times. Landor's villa, Salvini's home, Hawthorne's across the valley, and the others. A score might be catalogued to tell of the drawing and holding power these Florentine hillslopes have had, and still have, over the sensitive spirits of art and song.

But this chapter was really to be a most specifically descriptive and practical one, to serve as introduction to this tale of how one lives modestly in a *villino* at Florence. It was to tell of the outsides and insides, and the conveniences and inconveniences, the differences and similarities of a Florentine dwelling when compared with "home." So there is necessity of a sort of word-picture of a villa; a catalogue of dimensions and relations, and an inventory of parts and appurtenances. As a matter of fact, such an inventory, even to each stray unbound Tauchnitz in its bookshelves and fugitive cork-screw and can-opener in the pantries, has to be made out and mutually agreed to as correct by contracting owner and lessee, and has to be faced with full seriousness and responsibility by the lessee at the time of his surrender of the premises to the owner.

Our villa is a house and garden, a pony stable, and a gardener's lodge. And it has a stone laundry-

tub that is the most picturesque thing about the premises—at least it is when Marina, the lovely laundress—the phrase is as true as it is alliterative—is bending over it. The villa lies on the up and down road that winds along the hill-side from Settignano village to Villa Gamberaia, the show place of the whole Settignano hill. This little stretch of roadway from the village to our gate is not the least of our joys. It dips and lifts its curving way along the verge of the hill lined by low stone walls, one of which grows higher and higher as we near the villa, and is crested for many rods with climbing roses; and gives from every yard of its way the most wonderful views of the Arno and Florence in its hill-rimmed cup.

The villa was formerly a group of three *contadinos'* (farmers') houses, which through the persistent and expensive efforts of two successive English owners have been merged into one. One can pick out the original units with some accuracy by standing on the roof-terrace and attending to the levels and directions of the various parts of the tiled roof. But the merger of the houses has been a successful one and there are no indications of faction or falling apart of the original trio. One of them, at least, is of decent age, as a sort of cornerstone is inscribed "1639." An inscribed plate put up by his nephew on the highway side of the house attests that in one of them lived, a generation or two ago, a painter of some note, one Malatesta. The wife of this nephew is now our teacher of Italian, and thus do we curiously maintain the association of our villa with the family of Malatesta.

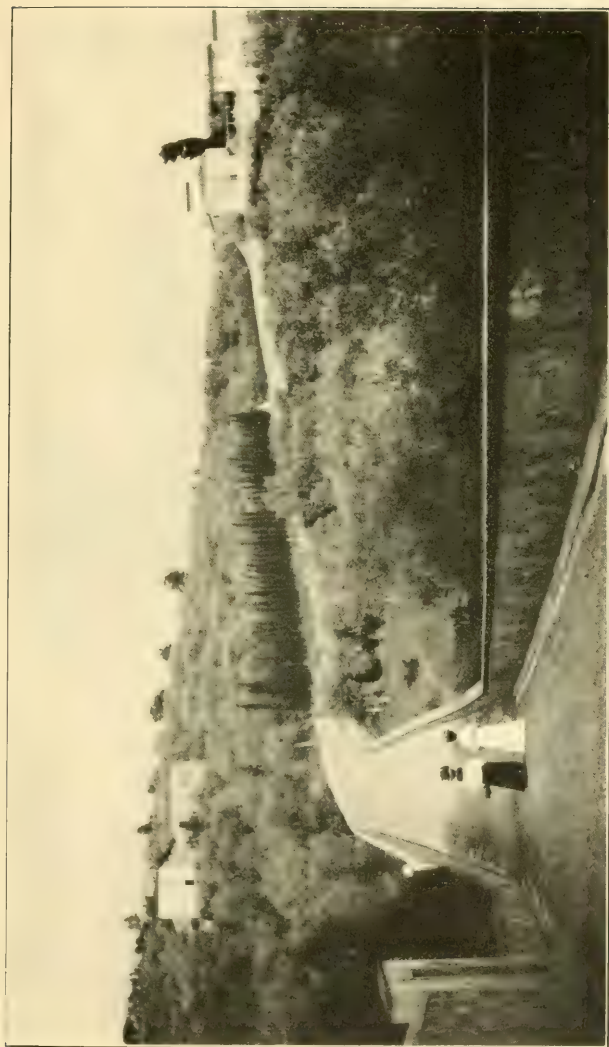


Photo. Author

SETTIGNANO ROAD THROUGH OLIVE ORCHARDS





The three-in-one house is long and sinuous. Long is surely the right name for a house with one hundred and sixty feet of running length and less than twenty-five feet of width in its widest and but seventeen in its narrowest part. What I mean by sinuosity in our house is its curious habit of following the curve of the road along which it extends its ten rods of length; inside it doesn't seem exactly to curve, but an analysis of the many little offsets and insets in the roadside wall, and the total lack of correspondence of the longitudinal partitions, show how the fitting of the house to the curving road has been accomplished. As the house wall is the actual boundary of the highway it is given two special means of keeping out the noise, of which there isn't much anyway, and the dust, of which there is less. These are, first, a comparative absence of windows, and second, an unusual thickness. The walls are, of course, as are all here, of stone and brick overlaid with a smoothish coat of cement.

There is a part of this face that no owner of the house may own. This is a small shrine let into the wall and under it a narrow projecting stone bench built into one of the rectangular juttings. The bench for the weary wayfarer and shrine for the passing pilgrim are appurtenances of the commune and not of us, nor of our landlord. It is in this shrine that our servants burn candles for us on holy days, and place flowers to be blessed when the village priest and his candle-bearing, singing procession of women and children comes along to bless the roadside shrines. The other side of the house, which is the south side

and the down-hill looking side, is anything but a blank white wall. It gives on the garden terrace, is full of windows and doors, and is adorned by balconies and a profusion of climbing vines. Its outjuttings are much more pronounced, taking on the character almost of "ells" and all of the ground-floor



"The other side of the house gives on the garden terrace and is adorned by balconies and a profusion of climbing vines."

doors, which are large and double and open from every room, have two or three stone steps leading up to them.

Inside there is the only possible arrangement of rooms in a house ten rods long by one to one and a half wide. Each floor—the house is full two stories—simply has a longitudinal series of successive rooms with occasional narrow corridors running along by

their side, in the widest, that is, least narrow, parts of the house. You cannot lose yourself. There are no mysterious side trails. You keep on ahead or turn around and stroll back along the same path. But it isn't monotonous, because, as I have said, the house is sinuous and the trail is a gently winding one. The whole general make-up suggests a two-story python with interior arrangements for human habitation.

There are in all twenty rooms, counting each least one, such as the bathroom. These rooms are equally divided in number between the two floors; but the arrangement of them below and above stairs does not correspond at all. Underneath, too, is a cellar containing a room with racks for wine and a never-failing well; the department of fluids. In the old days this well belonged with the shrine and the stone bench outside the house to the commune. In fact the shrine and the bench are the outward visible signs and relics of the well, which once was public and furnished water to many generations of *fiaschi*-bringing old wives and children; but now is private and perhaps the most valuable single asset of the Villa Brocca. Through all the summer long was needed only a cry to Beppi of "*Acqua fresca, per piacere,*" and the glasses were soon poured from the dripping copper pail and the full draughts of cold clear water drunk thankfully down. And this kind of water is not the most easily got thing anywhere and at any time in Italy.

On the ground floor is, first, the *salone*, or parlor, with parquetry floor, timbered ceiling painted in

brown and gray-green and bossed in full gilt, gray-green walls, chimney-corner fireplace, and large double doors opening south on the garden terrace. One of the windows is a high, pretty, iron-bound square with casement doors of leaded glass.

From this room a narrow tiled corridor runs along the north wall to the main entrance hall. Off this corridor opens the *salottino*, which we used as study and smoking-room. It also, like the *salone*, has double doors giving on the garden. The floors of *salone*, corridor, and *salottino* are all at slightly different levels, a condition common as well to all other parts of this curiously assembled house.

On the entrance hall, which gives on the garden, opens a bathroom. A corridor runs from the hall to the dining-room and a curving stair rises from it to the second floor. This stairway, with great flower pots of dwarf lemon trees and azaleas on its landings and a beautiful pair of long Persian shawls depending from the upper balustrade, is very attractive. From the corridor there opens darkly under the stair an odd little door into the roadway along the sinuous north wall of the house. But we rarely use this entrance, preferring the big wistaria-covered garden gate at the east end of the house.

The dining-room is long and narrow, with high timbered ceiling and tiled floor. All the floors, indeed, except the parquetry one of the *salone*, are of tile. And the windows of this room, as well as its great double doors, open on the garden terrace. The view from the table out into the blooming garden,

and the soft air and sweet fragrance that come in from it, add a rare and special flavor to the dishes.

From the dining-room opens the serving-room, with a curious little cold pantry built into the thick north wall of the house and led up to by a narrow little stair of four steps. Next comes the kitchen, with timbered ceiling, tiled floor, and windows on the terrace. From it rises a stairway to the children's rooms and balcony on the second floor, and doors open from it, one to a brick-tiled sort of outer open court jutting off the terrace, and another into a servants' dining-room, where Maria, Marina, and Beppi have their sociable meals. That is, they do when they do not have them out on the brick-floored court or in their terrace arbor with its stone table and stone seat benches.

Beyond this servants' room are two store and fuel rooms opening on to the brick court. As the pony stable is down in the lower garden, and it would be too much trouble to run the cart up and down from this lower garden to the upper terrace with its entrance gate giving on the road, the owner of the villa used one of these storerooms for the cart.

So much, then, for the first floor. We can run along the second more rapidly.

First, over the salone, a beautiful large bedroom, Rowena's room, of course, a comfortable, airy, joyous room with dark blue-gray walls and whitish ceiling; a window in the north or road-side wall, iron-barred, heavily shuttered, and two large double casement windows in the south or garden wall, opening



on a beautiful little vine-clad balcony that runs all the length of this and the next room.

From this room a narrow tiled corridor runs along the north wall to the stair landing with a door opening off into the next sleeping-room, which also has double casement windows opening on the south wall balcony over the terrace.

From this stair landing doors open into a small guest bedroom and into another large one and also into a vine-clad stone stairway leading to the roof-terrace. Beyond the guest bedrooms are children's and servants' rooms, to which access from outside is got by a back stairway. Along the south or terrace side of these rooms, and around the corner along the east wall of the last one, runs a pretty little play place on the east end of the house.

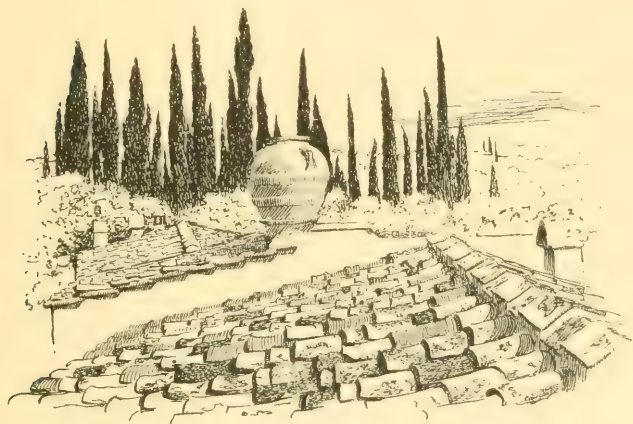
Such is the house. And it is the house unadorned. As a matter of fact, what with heavy furniture, Eastern rugs and hangings, and flowers and dwarf shrubs in all the rooms, and vines about all the windows, and pots of green and color on all the door-steps, it is a house very much adorned. And with bathroom and fireplaces it is as comfortable as it is pleasant to see.

But there are yet the outbuildings and the garden to tell of. The garden! ah, that is the joy over all; that will be the untellable thing. That May procession of flowers! Those wonderful June evenings of fire-flies! Those July days of *cicale*! The oranges in blossom; the *nespoli* ready for eating; the fat figs ripening and swelling to bursting; the tiny olives, slowly, so very slowly, getting to be less tiny and



then to be not tiny at all, just small and finally—but this is not the place!

It is the turn of the outbuildings. These are in the lower garden. We get to this lower garden from the terrace, which is on the same level as the house, either by the pretty stone stair by the walnut trees



“The huge red brocca on the housetop.”

or by the gently dropping path with the tall poppies on one side and the dwarf red roses on the other. At the end of this path is the stone laundry tub under an arbor of Banksia roses, and next to it the vine-clad pony stable with three little stalls. In it is also a room in which Beppi sits each day for half an hour to turn the big wheel that someway pumps water from the cistern to the huge red brocca on the housetop. Opposite the pony stable is the gardener's house with two sleeping-rooms and grainroom, and

underneath it alcoves for the pots and tools. There are cement-walled forcing frames near by, with the glass tops all broken by hail.

And now, finally, after all this laborious and perhaps superfluous detail of description, the truly inquiring mind, especially that cautious feminine one; the mind really interested because its possessor indulges the fancy, perhaps, of some day living for a short while in a modest villa in Italy; this one will ask:

"Well, and after all is this pythonesque villa of yours, or any other one like it, really livable? Is it truly a house in which you can be comfortable and cheerful and where your dreams actually come true?"

"Well, and it is," is all we have to say.

The thick walls that keep out cold and heat; the water that is good, and enough of it; the fireplaces and stoves; the bright, sunny, south-facing, warm rooms of winter and the same rooms airy, darkened, and cool in summer; the breeze-filled balconies and roof-terrace; the fragrant outdoor breakfast arbor; the magic garden with its blossoms and green tangle: all of these are realities of comfort and luxury. And this quite apart from the joys of seeing and doing outside our garden wall; our leisurely enjoyment of Florence, our trips through the Tuscan hills or along Arno valley to the Tuscan towns; our hours in the fields and country paths, our constant pleasure in the wit and play of the Tuscan.

Perhaps I should add one more matter of information for that cautious, truly inquiring feminine mind

that has visions of a future year in Italy. The rent of such a house is not prohibitive. It is, in fact, just about what the rent of a house of half as many rooms would be on a good street in an American town of twenty thousand inhabitants.

### CHAPTER III

#### SERVANTS, MARKETING, AND HOUSE-KEEPING

**T**O live in however small a villa requires servants and a dog. In our case the dog and one of the servants came with the villa. We had to have them whether we liked or not. But the more we have them the better we like them.

Beppi is the gardener. But if you were a strong man—strong enough to be a hod-carrier, for that is what Beppi was originally—and had come by chance to have in charge a garden about the size of a man's pocket-handkerchief, would you need all your time for digging and watering and pruning? Well, neither does Beppi. He is just such a gardener as you or I would be. And besides he has charge also of the dog. That is why he gets more money than either the cook or the maid—forty lire a month for his varied services.

He is fastidiously humane about this dog, whose name is Boy. Beppi begins bright and early in the morning to garden a little. He chops for some minutes at the weeds in the tulip bed. But hold, a thought! There should be meat got for Boy. Even now he howls lugubriously and the terrible Gamberaia dog is nowhere near. For what, then, is this howling if not for hunger? So Beppi makes a little

*passeggiata* to the village for meat for Boy. And as custom and politeness demand, he gives a few necessary moments to passing the time of day with his numerous friends on the street.

After the meat is safely in Boy's jaws, Beppi begins swinging his long-necked little green watering can or trundling again his toy wheelbarrow down the gravel path between the pale-blue flags and the deep-red roses. But again Boy howls. Beppi has forgotten the bread for the dog! *Che peccato!* To have to interrupt one's pressing duties of gardener for the sake of a brute dog! But, if it *must* be—— And so back to the village again to buy bread, for Maria, the cook, will give him none. And another passing of the time of day with his friends of the street. The time is different, you see, by an hour perhaps!

But after his bread Boy goes to sleep. And there is nothing to interrupt Beppi in his gardening. With some creaking of the knees he gets down to an earnest, if somewhat deliberate, weeding of the gravel path. Handful after handful of poor little uprooted green things drop into the toy wheelbarrow. It is a day of sunshine. Beppi mops his clipped gray head. He lets his eye follow along the path down to the lower rose arbor. Not a spot of shade in it anywhere.

"Beppi—Beppee!"

Beppi scrambles to his feet with a surprising alacrity.

"Commandi, Signora!"

"Acqua fresca, Beppi!"

"Sissignora!"

And up out of the lower garden and on to the terrace goes Beppi for the shining brass-bound copper pails. Down he plunges with them into the dark, cool cellar under the hallway and soon he comes in smiling and happy with the filled glasses on the tray. Ah, this good water so fresh and clear and cold on this day of terrible sunshine. And we drink to Beppi's gardening!

Maria and Marina, approximate names but antipodal personalities, were not appurtenances of the villa; they had to be found. The methods of seeking servants in Italy are about the same as those we use in America. Rowena besieged agents—for there are good ones in Florence—besought pension mistresses, enlisted the interest of friends, and even questioned shopkeepers with whom she came into professional acquaintance. It was by this last and least promising way that she discovered Marina the maid, or cameriera. Out of Navoni's lace shop on the Via Strozzi came the clue that put beautiful Marina into our hands. She was the daughter of an Arezzo hairdresser, and had had very little training as maid. But her red-brown hair, her big, soft Italian eyes and bright cheeks, her youth and pretty grace, and her swift intelligence made Rowena's brief questioning and examination a mere formality. As to wages, Marina suggested twenty or twenty-five lire a month. Rowena made it twenty-five: and Marina's cheeriness and neatness and prettiness have been a wonderful bargain at five dollars a month. Not to speak of her actual services, which include caring for the rooms, serving at table, and acting as lady's-maid





Photo. Author

BEPPI AND THE WATER PAILS



to Rowena. This last she accomplishes with particular deftness and cleverness. Finally, she does all the lighter laundry work at the picturesque stone tub under the Banksia arbor in the garden. In this last item alone she has actually saved us her wages each month.

The discovery of Marina was a step toward getting established, but the most important one of the little household was yet to find,—namely the cook. Rowena's specifications required that this person be, first, a woman; second, a woman who could cook; third, an honest woman who could cook; and, fourth, an honest woman cook who could and would cater economically. Again she sought the agencies, the friends, and the friendly shopkeepers. Days passed of much inquiring and of occasional refusing of cooks who claimed to be honest and who confessed to a special cleverness as economical caterers, but who also to their and our regret were men. All of them, too, wanted from fifty to fifty-five lire a month as wages, and estimated that they could not buy for master and mistress and three servants for less than fifteen lire a day. And yet we knew that families of two in Florentine villini were living comfortably for much less.

Finally came the day of success; it was announced by a summons from the agent who had let us the villa. Rowena listened to his news; he had discovered a woman cook of proved honesty and economy. She was "rather old" and a "bit queer" and she bore, for unknown reasons, the sobriquet of "The Turk." But she had served in a small English family near

### 34 Servants, Marketing, and Housekeeping

Fiesole for eleven years, and her recommendations were excellent. Would Rowena see her?

When "The Turk" waddled in the first glance was not reassuring. She was short, broad, animated, and positive. She talked on one foot at a time, with one eye at a time, breaking excitedly from Italian into a curious German patois and back again repeatedly. But with acquaintanceship grew confidence. Her face was better than her figure. Also she asked but thirty-five lire as wages, and was sure that she could provide decently for us for six or seven lire a day. Rowena engaged her, and we still make the monthly returning of that day a special *fiesta*. Maria became from the start more than satisfactory, she became indispensable. And she revealed herself at once no less a woman of heart and wit and beautiful devotion, than an excellent cook and a willing slave to our every need.

The villa had been "put in order" for our coming. But when Maria arrived she gave one swift inclusive glance and plunged immediately into such ecstasies of groaning and scrubbing and calling on the saints and polishing, as made leisurely, thoughtful, polite old Beppi stare half in pain, half in admiration. The kitchen had not been used for nine months. Nor the pantry and *tinello* (servants' dining-room). For days Maria scoured and polished until the boards shone white under their thin green paint, and all the kitchen wall gleamed with its copper pots and yellow bowls. Even Beppi was galvanized into an unwonted activity. He kept busy bringing in big pots of callas and azaleas and arraying them along the stairways and in the

window-boxes of the salone, while above stairs Marina was cleaning and sunning the wardrobes and dressers and pulling and pushing things according to Rowena's notions of convenience and taste. The only note of confusion arose from Maria's occasional explosive sallies into the front part of the house demanding permission to do a copper or brass that belonged in Marina's domain. Maria has an insatiable mania for polishing.

All through this real putting in order, this getting arranged and settled for routine days, shone out the joy of living and joy of personal service that lie inborn in these Italian servants. And once settled into the routine this singing, laughing, care-free taking of life as it came became more and more conspicuous. To be sure, we were a small household of few cares and light duties. Maria solemnly said once to her respectfully listening auditors at evening meal in the kitchen court under the stars: "This is our first real service, and after this there will be no other like it."

Maria is undisputed head of the little servant group. She buys their food and cooks and serves it for them. She exhorts them to industry and seriousness. For fascinating Marina has fairly bewitched old Beppi into a youthful behavior that almost scandalizes black-gowned Maria. He cuts choice flowers for the kitchen table, he even slips a few of the big, soft figs from the *padrone's* trees into Marina's hands. And when Marina and Beppi give Boy a bath in the big green tub under the servants' arbor on the terrace, the joyous peals of Marina's laughter and the

## 36 Servants, Marketing, and Housekeeping

pretended scolding phrases of Beppi must carry clear across the olive hill-slope to the silent, shut-in, sad grand lady of the great castle-like villa there.

They love the out-doors, these servants; these happy "little people" of the Tuscan hills and sunny skies. When we go to Florence for the day and time is theirs, and Maria seeks for coppers that may be repolished or finds a corner of floor that can stand more rubbing, Beppi and Marina drift out of the wistaria-bound gate and across the road and up into the sloping orchards and vineyards of the Gamberaia demesne. And they come back with arms full of wildflowers and tall grasses for the house. When the reapers came into the nearby fields Marina was breathless with excitement. She imitates the cicale and the frogs. When the frog in the lower garden croaks softly she says he has water enough; when he grunts he is demanding rain and we must beware of wettings. When the rainbow appears after a shower she prognosticates the harvest by it. If there is more red than yellow or green in it, it will be a good year for wine; if more green, a good season for oil; if more yellow, a rich harvest of grain. She carries her sewing out under the ilex arbor: she insists on the out-of-door meals for them all. And she dearly loves to spread our breakfast or tea table on the terrace under the rose pendants.

Maria, who is Montenegrin and not Tuscan, and who has lived mostly in great cities, as Vienna and Budapesth, finds less joy outside her quarters. She keeps mostly to her shining kitchen, always so fresh and sweet. But she has a passion for travel. Her



ambition is to see America. She once prepared, secretly, to sail for New York. She had saved the money and was going to slip away to the steamer and then send back word to her astonished friends. She makes great effort to carry out even her smallest plans with secrecy. Something slipped in the matter of the New York expedition and it had to be postponed. But she hopes to see it through some day. However, she holds Florence to be the loveliest city in the world, but the Florentines—ah, they don't deserve their beautiful city. She wishes to see the whole world, but she wants to come back to die in Florence. She has, poor creature, an ailing leg. And this gives her necessity or excuse to go once each year to the baths. And of all places, Montecatini. Montecatini is the Carlsbad of Italy.

Maria nurses her lame leg there by the side of princes and millionaires. She does not stay long, but she stays well. How many have a servant who takes the waters at the swellest baths of the country? Maria not only cooks for us: she lends us distinction.

The wages of the servants have been told. And it may be recalled that Maria undertook to buy the food and oil and wine for our household for "six or seven lire" a day. This seems a small sum, and it is, even for Italy, where, despite the high prices for meats and poultry, living is really cheap. And it means, of course, that the wine was *vin ordinaire*, and not overmuch of that. For the rest, though, it was good living for simple tastes. But perhaps it takes a Maria to make a dollar and a half a day go so far.

Rowena gives to Maria each evening the money for the purchases of the morrow. For Maria is off to the village each morning while we are still sitting over our coffee on the terrace. On Saturday mornings she goes to Florence for more important purchases and special delicacies: a chicken, perhaps, or a pair of pigeons, fish, calves' brains, or sweetbreads, or some other special bit. When she gets back with her bundles, puffing and important, voluble of her experiences of the market, Rowena goes to the kitchen, and then begins Maria's great hour. The scales are got out, the provisions spread over the table, and the account books opened. Maria becomes philosopher, raconteur, actress. Is she cheery and good-humored? That means a successful business. She is quiet and downcast? She was overmatched in a delicate bit of trading. She produces her bills, she weighs and comments.

Maria has no faith in tradesmen's honesty. "Alas, there is no humanity left. Each of us is but one among thousands nowadays." She even admonishes Rowena to be watchful in dealing with her. "I am honest to-day: but who knows what I shall be to-morrow?" And with a great sigh she exclaims: "I have lived much and seen how it goes: and many times I think I do not care to survive longer in the midst of such inhumanity."

Her triumph over a small success in bargaining is as exaggerated as her despair over non-success. She boasted for days over getting some peaches softer and for one soldo less apiece than Rowena had paid on the same day. Another day she wept in the

shop because eight peaches cost a lira. As she tells her tale of the morning's bargaining, of the rapacity of the tradesmen, and of her own triumphs or defeats, her head and hands and body sway and leap like a pantomime actor's. She raises her arms to heaven; she bows her head in despair; with her hands she clutches her throat as those robbers do metaphorically; she snaps her thumb-nail against her teeth with a sharp, hissed out "*zitta*," that conveys a portentous injunction to secrecy. She moans and sobs, gloats and exults. It is all very moving: and it all has to do with the expenditure of a dollar and a half a day.

The meats are the familiar ones of home; but more parts of the animal are used in Italy than with us. However, one does not need to follow the Italians too far in this. Veal is the national meat: veal cutlets, veal stew, and veal roasts are the staple courses of the Italian table. We had hard work to make Maria get roast beef and beefsteak, and she in her turn had hard work to get them. Mutton is abundant. But the Italian believes that civilized man should touch only white meat. So next to veal he uses chicken. The traveler in Italy must come out of it with a firm conviction that there are no cattle in the country: they must all be eaten as calves, and milk and butter are so rarely visible. And he must have an equally convinced belief in an overwhelming Italian production of poultry. In June Maria complains that chickens, and very small ones at that, are costing three lire. But she cheers herself with the thought of the coming July. "In July we are all padroni.

There are chickens for all of us then!" she exclaims.

Along with chickens are pigeons and, to Italy's shame, hosts of small birds of field and hedgerow. Italy has sacrificed all her song-birds to her table. I shall never forget seeing dozens, scores of the tiny little carcasses impaled on two long slowly turning spits, before a great open fire in the kitchen dining-room of a little hotel in northern Italy. And as I looked over the heap of yet unplucked sacrifices on a nearby table, I counted easily a dozen different species of song-birds. There were larks, thrushes, sparrows, titmice, and even tiny warblers awaiting the fire.

Of vegetables we have, varying somewhat with the months, cauliflower, spinach, peas, asparagus, artichokes, beets, string beans, peas, tomatoes, flat beans, and *zucchini*, this last an odd kind of little squash, very tender and palatable. The cauliflower and spinach come early and the spinach, at least, lasts all through the season. The tomatoes are rather late, as are also the flat beans. The *zucchini* begin in June and from that time on fill all gaps in the vegetable bill of fare. In July they seemed to reign supreme. They came on not only in their own undisguised naked little cucumber or slender egg-shaped bodies and in their proper place as vegetable course, but they turned up in pieces in the soup, as the filling of omelets, or stuffed with chopped meat, or fried in thin slices, or mashed to purée. They managed to smuggle themselves in twice a day. Life became a *zucchini*-haunted nightmare. We demanded some other kind of vegetable, but Maria said there was none to be had. Marina, however, who had to see

our daily agonies, had her heart touched and whispered one day: "Yes, there is one other kind to be had: beans."

We called for Maria. "Beans, Maria: we demand beans."

Maria looked aghast.

"The padrone and padrona have asked for beans," she said slowly. "It is quite true that they wish to eat beans?"

We were mystified by the serious results of our simple request. But we answered firmly that we did wish and, indeed, demanded beans. Or rather we did not so much demand to eat beans as not to eat zucchini. The situation gradually cleared; and a *modus vivendi* was come at. Whether we ate beans I must not tell, for the servants agreed not to and we can do no less. Maria, Beppi, and Marina might eat beans; but the padroni never. And it was nearly as bad with the macaroni, although we were allowed as much as we liked of a certain delicate form of spaghetti. The line is very sharp between what is food for the servants and "little people" and what is food for the gentlefolk. *Noblesse oblige*, even to starvation!

Fortunately there are no convenances to observe in the matter of soups and salads; at least we have run afoul of none. There is a variety and excellence in both of these courses that well makes up for an occasional brief period of monotony in the vegetables. And we have eggs abundant and fresh and manipulated by Maria with the hand of an artist. Omelets of a lightness and a variety as to unexpected



interior presences to make one gasp with admiration. We have fresh, crisp little radishes from our own garden, and occasionally thin onion stems. Maria's desserts are tarts, fruit puddings, a particular kind of fritter-like thing, Portuguese and fried cream, and the favorite Italian *zabbaione*, a sort of thick egg punch made with Marsala. Fig pudding and chestnut pudding, too, appeared in season. Of these desserts Maria seems to have trouble with her fried creams, although to us they seem always excellently prepared. "Cursed be the cook that invented fried cream!" she cried one day: quickly adding, "But I can make plum pudding like laughing!"

The fresh fruits do not fairly begin until June. Up till then there are, of course, oranges and mandarins. In June come cherries (enormous ones), strawberries, raspberries, gooseberries, apricots, and peaches. In July little pears and the first figs appear and there are still apricots and peaches. In August come plums, melons, the second figs, and the first grapes, while peaches and pears still last. In September we have the bulk of the figs, soft, oozy purple or greenish-white flasks of nectar and cheap to absurdity. Sometimes the figs, although looking good, were bad. "Like *donne del mondo*," said Maria, "fair on the outside but false within."

When there are not fresh fruits to come within our "six or seven lire a day" budget, there are dried fruits and raisins and nuts. From Calabria come wonderful little packets of small raisins soaked in wine and closely wrapped up in fragrant grape-leaves.



The Italians make some unusual combinations with their fresh fruit. For example, they eat together pears and cheese, placing slices of pear on thin strips of cheese like a sandwich. They eat figs and also melons with ham.

The buying is very different from that which we do in America. Hardly anything but oil and wine is kept in stock in the house. Even the flour and sugar are got in little paper bags of a few pounds. The provisioning is for the day; each day the commissary is renewed. Two and three cents' worth of things: a single egg sometimes: enough vanilla for just the pudding at dinner, that is the way one buys not only in Italy, but all over the Continent, for that matter.

The oil and wine we get from the nearby villa of an authoress. The wine comes in open *fiaschetti* and is kept in the cool cellar: but we actually use less of it than of oil. The amount of oil used in an Italian kitchen is appalling to anti-fry hygienists. We get it in great straw-covered *fiaschetti* and reckon paying for it as something apart from food; something rather to be classed with fuel and lights.

But these discursive notes are too evidently those of an untrained observer. I am no specialist in such matters. To pay the bills, yes; and to wonder while paying them how much we seem to have for how little we give. There are brains mixed with this housekeeping without doubt: Rowena's and Maria's. But these notes show the possibilities. Excellent service, and all simple people need or indeed could well eat, the simple commissary not only wholly

## 44 Servants, Marketing, and Housekeeping

sufficient for us, but including enough to entertain our friends willing to take pot-luck; the food fresh and clean, cooked admirably by a philosopher and wit, served by a graceful creature of a face and eyes to craze an artist; and all this for a sum within the resources of a very slender purse, indeed. What more could one ask? Perhaps just one thing more: the glimpse of Beppi, bareheaded, leisurely and carefully carrying the big lighted lamp along the garden terrace from the kitchen to the salone. He brushes by the roses as he walks, and to us within at dinner, with the double doors wide open on the terrace, comes the fragrance from the dancing flowers. And we stop and hold our breath for very wonder and happiness.

Indeed, all of Beppi's day is one contribution to the picturesque. He has more to do than merely garden and look after the dog. First thing in the morning he opens up the house. He unfastens the outer green shutter doors, takes down the iron bars he has put up the evening before across the inner glass doors, and swings them all wide open on to the garden terrace. Then he draws the long window curtains apart and rearranges the callas and azaleas and cinerarias about the doorways and in the hall and rooms. He cuts fresh roses and irises and heaps them up in the serving-room for the later arranging under the padrona's direction.

If it is Tuesday or Saturday morning Beppi then takes out the rugs for a sweeping, and the upholstered chairs for a vigorous punching. He feeds the dog, and if it is the proper day, gives him a bath.

Then he can garden a little: water some of the flowers perhaps, or dig up a few new potatoes or gather some artichokes for Maria. For our garden yields a little of everything, it seems; flowers, fruits, and vegetables. He trundles his toy wheelbarrow around, or clips the long new shoots and pendants on the rose arbors. Or sometimes he climbs up into the loquat tree to pick off all over-ripe fruit, so that the little beetles will not gather so abundantly in this tree that shades our breakfast table.

But whatever Beppi is doing or wherever in house or garden he may be, he is ever on the alert and prompt with his "*Sissignora, vengo subito*," when the call comes. This call may be for fresh cold water, or it may be to carry a departing guest's bag to the tram in the village, or it may be to go to Florence, six miles away, on some errand. He responds and goes always as if this opportunity to serve were a favor bestowed on him. He has an initiative of his own, too. Should we have gone to Florence without raincoats or umbrella, and rain comes on, how often has Beppi been on hand at the tram's end with big green umbrella to escort us home. And if we are late he mounts to the roof to watch for the first sight of us along the winding road from the village, so that Maria may be warned just when to stir the fire under the waiting soup. Sometimes Marina replaces Beppi on the housetop. And then what a sight to welcome one home; this graceful weather-vane, with blowing hair and laughing face, that waves a greeting from the red tiles.

Beppi feels a fine personal responsibility, too, for

his people and his premises. He it is that meets the beggars and the would-be intruders at the gate with Boy growling fiercely at his heels. And his fatherly, protecting attitude toward the two women servants is a delight to see. At their long, merry dinner together Beppi sits at the head of the table and leads the conversation like the true gentleman host he is. And even in his insatiable curiosity to know all that concerns us his politeness makes his questions seem but a kindly interest. One day a traveling friend, a writer of verses, had tea with us. After he left, Beppi and his long-necked watering pot busied themselves quietly about the flowers near the tea-table where we still sat, until he asked casually, "Is the gentleman from your home, perhaps, Signora? Is he long away? What does he do?" And when he was answered that the gentleman was a poet, he responded politely, "Ah, and is he perhaps greater than d'Annunzio?"

In the service of Beppi and Marina and Maria there is a quality of personal relationship and personal devotion that are its finest and most beautiful characteristics. And their manifestations take very delightful forms! We wandered out one Sunday morning into the Gamberaia fields and found the day and the flowers and the cicale and all so enchanting that luncheon time came and we were not aware of it. And after a while, as we lay outstretched on a flower-bank by a path in the olive orchard, we heard a step and there was smiling Beppi, hat in hand, and softly saying the hour. He had sought us through the fields and orchards while Marina had gone by

the roadway, and as we all came home together, Maria stood welcoming us at the gate.

They never forget our special festa days even if we sometimes forget them, and we never go away for a little two or three days' trip to some Tuscan town but they put candles in the shrine to burn for our safe return. One day when we came back from Prato we were so late that we dined in Florence before coming out to the villa. When we finally reached home, Marina and Beppi met us on the road from the village, where they had been waiting a full hour, while at home Maria had heard a *civetta* (little owl) cry in the garden, and was crossing herself and praying for our safe return. We never go to bed at night without their "*Felice notte, buon riposo,*" and Beppi's last call for "*commandi.*"

Ah! such servants, such comrades in pleasure: such nature-lovers, such poets, such children! Servants who are neither servile inferiors nor superior insolents: servants who serve as friends serve, happy in their work and making us happy, making the days full of song and good cheer, full of the joy of being alive in a land of sunshine and flowers and beauty. We can begin to understand that extraordinary clinging to the very last of Michelangelo to his old servant Urbino.

"For the older he grew," says Grimm of the great artist, "the more the number dwindled of those whom he had gathered round him in middle age. He had sat day and night by the sick couch of his old servant to whose widow . . . he turned with the most anxious sympathy. The letter which he wrote to

## 48 Servants, Marketing, and Housekeeping

Vasari on Urbino's death is truly desponding. The one hope alone remained to him of soon meeting his lost friend in another life. He had indeed felt, he says, how Urbino, as he lay dying, had suffered less from the fear of his own death than from the thought of being obliged to leave him behind him thus old and solitary in this false and miserable world, in which nothing now remained for him but ceaseless calamity."



## CHAPTER IV

### OUR GARDEN

**I** SAY our garden; but I mean any garden near Florence. The procession of flowers must pass through all in about the same order. Ours is small, and not an "Italian garden," if by that is meant one with straight, broad paths and long vistas closed by sculptures or fountains; one with cypresses, plaster grottoes, and carved stone benches. But everywhere in Italy there are the typical flowers and vines, the harmonies of odor and color, the swift succession of bursting blossoms, the day-long song of insects, the going and coming of soft breezes that set all the myriad leaves to dancing, and the true Italian languor and loveliness over all. We have seen other Florentine and hill-side gardens, and we like ours better the more we see these others. We are prejudiced? Perhaps. But the garden is not ours for ever, we have no proprietary interest in it, simply a lease on its beauties and joys for a little time, hardly more enduring or personal than the rambler's lease we have on any other garden we can get into. Still, it is, perhaps, true that we are prejudiced. I hope so, indeed. It is good to like the things you have; it is one of the first secrets of happiness.

The great villa near by has a real "Italian gar-

den," a representative of the type made famous by the gardens of the Villa d'Este at Tivoli and the Villa Medici on the Pincian Hill. The box-hedges along the long, broad paths, the statues in the vistas, the water playing down the stucco cascade steps or spouting from the dolphins' mouths; the cypresses spiring high; the dense-headed ilexes, the Japanese grotesqueness and beauty of the stone pines, and the clinging vines up the broken pillars and old tree trunks; all that belongs to the type is there.

Ours is a homely little garden for homely people. It does not call for a staff of gardeners, but for a single Beppi and a singing woman in wide straw hat, trowel in hand. It is a garden of an acre, perhaps, dropping rather quickly down the hill-slope, bounded by high stone retaining walls on the sides and lower end and by the smiling face of the long, low house on the up-slope end. At this end there is a built-up, level terrace varyingly twenty to forty feet wide and extending all along the house front; and on it a pavilion arbor of *Banksia* rose for coffee in the morning, tea in the afternoon, and hammock, steamer chairs, and reading-table for all between times.

There are a few trees on the terrace; a loquat standing so close to the arbor that the yellow fruits fall as they ripen on to the very breakfast table; a dense arbor vitæ, shaped like a top upside down, with the little blue-gray cones studding its bright-green surface; an olive, a pear or two, a big fan-palm, and a plum tree with a thriving family of large black carpenter ants in its ragged trunk. Then there are two lemon trees in great red-brown pots nearly a

yard high and as broad across the top, and a *rhyndospermum* as fragrant as a jasmine in another big pot. The June evenings were heavy with the odor of myriad white blossoms.

But mostly the terrace is given to vines, shrubs, and bedded plants. Against the west wall is a row of high pink oleanders that blossom all through the summer, while at their feet cluster bridal wreath, mignonette, and old-fashioned white pinks. In the angle of wall and house run up two roses, a yellow and a red, clasping and twining about each other in inextricable confusion. They go up by the salone door and over it to the balcony, which they drape as with heavy green cloths all figured with red and yellow. Then they climb on up to the tiled roof of the house. In fact, all along this south or garden face of the long house the plant draperies of roses, jasmine, brilliant trumpet-flowers, and orange, hang in wonderful beauty and richness. This orange drapery was new to us who only knew the ordered rows of the California orchards. By the salottino door and by that of the entrance hall are two thick, flat, fragrant climbing masses of it.

The *Banksia* rose arbor, a snowy mass in May, is backed by lilacs that blossom in April and May, and yuccas that send up their tall spikes of creamy white blossoms in June. This bed is bounded on one side by clematis supported on wires between low, green stakes, and is filled with pansies, anemones, stock, geraniums, and foliage plants. Across a path to the east is a palm bed, in which are also myrtle, snapdragons, and more clematis, stock, and yuccas. All along the

house wall and clustering around the feet of the lifting vines are geraniums, heliotrope, snapdragons, myrtle, laurestinus, and foliage plants, giving a constant succession of new blossoms and changing color.

In front of the dining-room terrace doors are two rose plots in which the flowers kept appearing steadily from May to August. At the height of rose time the display all over the little garden is nothing short of breath-taking; there is a perfect riot and clamor of roses on the walls, along the balconies, hanging from the roofs, massed on arbors, lined alongside the paths, and scattered in groups in beds and about the bases of trees. White, yellow—a magnificent Maréchal Niel is spread all over one end of the gardener's house—pink, red, saffron, copper; all the possible colors of roses in “massy harmonies” of unplanned grouping and design.

In front of the kitchen doors there is a dense ilex arbor with stone table and stone benches, where the servants are supposed to have their meals. They do sometimes, but mostly they prefer their dinners under the stars, setting the table on the open little brick-floored court next the kitchen and storerooms. Their part of the house and terrace is no less rich in blossom and vine than ours. Indeed, the most striking picture on the terrace is the curving line of azaleas, white, pink, and red, that follows the looping wall which runs from near the kitchen door to the outer gate. This wall I call looping because its crest is a series of shallow arcs of circles with intervening flat-topped spaces on which stand pots of agaves. As the ground rises to the gate these loops of wall, hung with

jasmine and rhynchospermum are succeedingly higher. The effect of wall-draping vines and cresting agaves is one of grace and unusual decoration.

The gate itself has its characteristic Tuscan overhanging tiled roof covered with a lush growth of wistaria, which comes into full blossom at the beginning of May but continues to send out sporadic masses of bloom all through the summer. From the gate roof the graceful vine runs on up the balcony over the children's play place and from there on up to the roof of the house. By each stone gate-post rises a thin young cypress.

The open spaces on the terrace covered with finely-broken red stone and soil are kept clean of fallen leaves and fruit by Beppi with fagot broom and basket. In these clear spaces, in little intimate groups or ringed round the circular beds and ranged on the stone steps of the house doors, are changing companies of potted plants; blossoming calas in April, cinerarias in May, carnations in June, geraniums in July, and chrysanthemums in the autumn; while along the coping of the retaining wall that holds the terrace above the lower



"In little intimate groups are changing companies of potted plants."



garden are more of these pots, some of them of unusual shape, tall and vase-like. This coping and these pots are very convenient for decoration. One festa day we draped all the walls with heavy red hangings and covered the stone steps of the house doors giving on the terrace also with red, and dropped other hangings from the balconies. Then we arranged the many and various pots on and by side of and under all these draperies. It was like a Carpaccio picture.

It is on the wall coping and in the dry open places of the terraces that the spotted green, beady-eyed, long-tailed little wall-lizards play. They play with each other in jest or love or anger; but they play in another way with the little nespoli beetles, and the flies that alight on the fallen fruit. This play is little fun for the beetles and flies. I have made our garden, so far in my account of it, exclusively a botanical one, which makes a curiously one-sided account, for it is a zoological one as well. But there are too many snails, too many great yellow wasps, too many black carpenter and blue leaf-cutter bees, too many green and silver leaf-chafers, too many very large black and very small red ants, and far, far too many rose beetles to be crowded into this chapter, already a bit over-full of blossoms and vinery. There are little owls and swift bats and a kind of great rat that affects stone walls and tiled roofs, and is, according to Beppi, really a very fearful creature. But all these must be passed with their names, and some others ignored altogether.

At one place just south of the big palm which is



outside the dining-room doors, the terrace is built farther out over the lower garden as a tile-floored, open court bounded by a wall three feet high and shaded by a large walnut tree that comes up from below. This is our outside dining-room when we prefer our dinner *al fresco*. As we sit here our eyes feast as well as our mouths. To the east are the olive plantations, the tall cypresses, and the beautiful face of Gamberaia; to the south the long, dropping hill-slope and Arno valley; to the southwest Florence and her roofs and domes. The north view is filled by the long, irregular vine-draped stretch of the house, with its many red-casemented, green-persianed doors and windows fronted by the blossoming masses of shrubbery and bedded plants. From this terrace court an angled little stone stair leads down to the lower garden. Or one may come to it from the terrace by a gently-dropping path from the west wall.

Down here is the real garden; here is where things grow in masses; where the roses are in low hedges along the paths; that is, if these hedges are not tall irises or climbing sweet peas. It is an olive plantation, a pear and fig and peach and apple orchard, a grass plot spotted with red poppies, a group of rose and passion flower and locust bowers, and a kitchen-garden of potatoes, asparagus, artichokes, tomatoes, and beans. It is a tangle of shrubbery, and an officinal garden of rosemary, lavender, and thyme. And with all this it seems to be, in May, wholly a garden of irises; of pale-blue ones mostly, but also of white ones and indigo ones and black-spotted

bronzy ones; everywhere just irises by untold hundreds. It is, in fact, a revelation of how much and various a garden of one acre can be; a tiny lot of



"An angled stone stair leads down to the lower garden."

ground made wonderful by the co-partnership of the wit and industry of man with the generosity of Nature.

There is a special pleasure in the unpremeditation

of paths, and in the astonishing juxtaposition of potatoes and irises or artichokes and lilacs. These happy victories of chance appeal to one's instinct of vagabondia and one's spirit of democracy. Why should not the lily and the onion be friends at elbows? They are of the same family!

Far away at the very lower end of the garden, which isn't really far at all, there is the other bounding, retaining wall rising high out of the olive grove below. In the arbor along this wall that is covered with rose, passion vine, and acacia and bordered by larches and arbor vitæ, we sometimes have tea, or lie on spread mattings to read and doze. From here we can look out intimately into the podere that stretches across and down the hill-slope below us. The podere is primarily an olive orchard; as, indeed, are all the hill-sides



"It seems to be, in May, wholly a garden of irises."

about Florence. But in it grapevines loop from tree to tree, and grain is underneath all. Three different crops, not to speak of scattering figs, mul-

berries, and other fruits, are taken from it by its owner each year, and to us it yields still another harvest: a harvest of continuous beauty of scene and interest of performance.

White oxen come here with red tassels on their faces, and laborers with grimy sashes girt about them. There are birds which chatter and call, and crickets, green grasshoppers, and cicale that sing and throb all through the long, warm, growing days. There is one nightingale; it stays high up in the podere, just below the cypresses and ilexes of Gamberaia and begins its singing usually about midnight, sometimes, though, not till just gray dawn. We have never heard it sing at midday, as nightingales are said sometimes to do.

If the podere adjoining us with its olive and vines and shivering grain belongs to us, what is to prevent our seeking a higher vantage point and making a wider inclusion in our proprietary dominance? The house-roof will be just the place. And it has besides a peculiar flora of its own, a roof-garden of an unusual kind. It is not the roof-terrace that is the roof-garden, there is not a single pot or flower-box there; it is the tiled roof itself that is the garden. For it is a veritable bed of lichen: green, sulphur-yellow, orange, rose-red, ashy, black, white lichens in bizarre spots and splashes everywhere, a beautiful place that grows lovelier and more interesting the more and the closer one looks at it. It reminds me always of another sort of garden quite different and far from it; a sea-garden; the bed of colored stones, splotted with flat sponges, boring molluscs, and shelled worms that

one sees at the bottom of clear tide-pools. We sometimes have our tea here, and then we take our wider possession of the hill-sides and valleys around us with their fields and orchards and forest patches. There are whole villages in the view; also a great monastery on the high hilltop to the east, where St. Francis and St. Dominic met; and there are two mediæval castles and an Etruscan city with its modern villas built on crumbling relics. And best of all there are the winding river and the haze-blue mountains. The hill-slopes just above and behind us, "the hills over-smoked behind by the pale-gray olive trees," are so close and so steeply rising that it seems as if we could step from our roof right into the olive orchard. But for the tunnel-like road below us between the house and the opposite high stone wall, we really could. To the west the village church steeple shoots squarely up across the setting sun, and its bells have a ludicrous way of kicking out from the belfry windows when they ring. The sun goes down behind the jagged peaks of the Apuan Alps, and the colors that slowly kindle and fade on the mountains and sky are a veritable conflagration.

One evening we came up here to see a great storm that raged over the distant hills and mountains south and west. Such boldness and swift succession of forking lightning flashes, such prolonged rolling and echoing and swelling and dying of thunder were new and wonderful to us. And then with the falling of the storm came on, for contrast, all the stillness of the Italian night in the country. The city sounds did not reach us and the garden insects mostly hush

with the onset of darkness. Below us the fire-flies twinkled in the garden: beyond them in the distance the lights of Florence twinkled in the streets and piazzas; and overhead the stars twinkled in the swiftly clearing sky.



## CHAPTER V

### OUR VILLAGE

FROM the Piazza del Duomo in Florence, the trysting-place of so many commuting villagers, the focus of so many street-cars and omnibuses, the tram leaves for Settignano every twenty minutes during early forenoon and late afternoon, and every hour during midday. The ride costs thirty *centesimi* and takes thirty-five minutes. It is a pleasant journey, and an interesting one for its glimpses of beautiful fields and hills. Fiesole perches in its narrow saddle over the Mugnone; and Florence grows grayer and more compact about its dome and towers, the higher we climb those "harmonious hills" where stands our village.

It is an interesting ride also, for the glimpses it gives, swift but vivid, of the people with whom we are for the moment living: *villeggiante*, *operaii*, and *contadini*, Florentines and Settignanese, but Tuscans all, with Tuscan wit and good humor, Tuscan ways and point of view. De Amicis has written a delightful little book of thumb-nail sketches of his traveling companions in these *carozze di tutti*, as he calls the tram cars of Turin. "*Non parlate al manovratore*" is placarded over the motor-man's head. But fortunately this interdiction of speech, while it may keep

others silent, does not seem to apply to the *manovratore* in the least. So he talks to you, to himself, to the donkey-carts and oxen-drivers of the country road; to the bicyclers and busmen of the city streets and the dust-covered pedestrians of the side paths. And rarely does his talk miss point; there is always in it a touch of humor or wit, of impudence or mordant advice. It is a whole philosophy in interjection and passing comment: an exercise of the Tuscan heritage come down from the master wits of the Renaissance. It is the transmuted poetry and epigram of the days of Lorenzo.

As we are ready to start, a bus blocks our way. Imprecations hurl up and down between the perched bus-driver and the tram platform. The busman reviles the lowly position of the motor-man. "But you must be a much worse sort than I," replies our man of the electric current, "for they put you up there alone, away from your passengers. We tram men associate with people, we."

A man struggles on with his arms full of bundles, which take time and cause confusion on the rear platform. The motor-man peers back over his shoulder, and asks: "Are you quite alone, then?"

While the car is at rest at Mensola, where old women are sitting in the shade by the bridge, weaving cloths on small hand looms, a peasant woman clambers in for a last moment's conversation with her padrona going to Settignano on an errand. It is time for the car to start, but the conversation ripples on. Finally, the motor-man, who has already waited two or three minutes beyond his schedule, interrupts:

“Pardon, but if perhaps the *massaia* [polite designation of the peasant wife] would deign to accompany us, we should have much pleasure. Have we permission to start?”

We come often too soon to the end of the thirty-five minutes of the tram line, and have to bid a regretful *a rivederci* to the motor-man.

Settignano is not another Fiesole, and few tourists come to know it. But it has good things to know; chief among these its beauties of setting and scene, its association with names conspicuous in sculpture and architecture, and among its villas one of the most noble and impressive and truly beautiful of any near Florence.

Settignano is still an unspoiled suburb of Florence. It has few *forestieri* to buy up and renovate its villas, to sophisticate its villagers, to teach its children beggary. It has just one real permanent beggar and he gives half his time to a neighboring hamlet. It is still peopled with primitive Tuscans, living the simple free life of *contadini* and little shopkeepers, enjoying their daily gossiping in street and piazza, their festa Sunday afternoons and evenings in *caffè con giardino*, and around the local band or choral club in the open place by the church. They have their oxen fair in June, and their harvest and vintage festivals in July and September as ever since the Virgilian days.

To us Settignano has its added interest of market-place and post-office; we have our clothes cleaned and boots patched there; we share, through our servants, its gossip and excitements; we contribute our share of *centesimi* to help bring back and bury

a soldier son of the village "dead in far Palermo." We take language lessons from its school-teacher, and greet daily the polite hostler of the man with the cart and shining little black pony which we should like dearly to own. We are padrone and padrona of



"They have their oxen fair in June."

a villa in Settignano, and as such are for the moment Settignanese and very glad of it.

But unless you come to live in Settignano you will not experience these delights, and as an earnest and persevering tourist hot on the trail of pictures and frescoes, of birthplaces and literary landmarks, you may even not want them. The streets and shops and people of Settignano will then be of only passing interest. Sights and names will be wanted. Well, our village has even something of these.

First, Desiderio the sculptor. He is Settignano's most famous son. The village cinematograph hall is

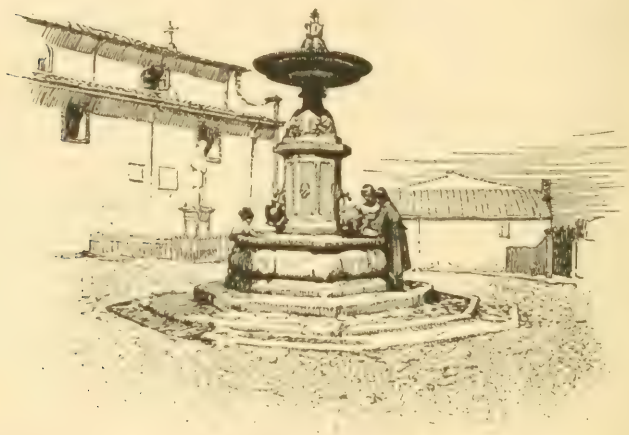
named for him! And so is the new piazza on the verge of the hill at the left of the end of the tram line. The pleasing statue of Desiderio here is by Vittorio Caradossi, and the inscription: "*A Desiderio nato sul colle harmonioso*," etc., by d'Annunzio. The view of Florence from this piazza is one of the best to be had from any equal distance from the city.

Desiderio di Bartolommeo, or Desiderio da Settignano, as he is better known, is generally esteemed the best of that little group of famous Tuscan sculptors who had their first training in the stone-carving sheds of Settignano, Fiesole, Maiano, and Rovezzano, hill-side villages on the Eastern outskirts of Florence. (See the chapter "The Sculptors from the Hill-side Quarries.") Of this group besides Desiderio, Settignano claims also the brothers Bernardo and Antonio Rossellino. And still other Settignanesi stone-carvers have come to distinction, if not to the wide fame of Desiderio and the Rossellini. Indeed, the village has always been the home of stone-cutters and carvers. "Modest quarriers and stone-cutters at first," says Carocci in his exhaustive account of the environs of Florence, "the Settignanesi felt quickly the influence of the arts that in Florence were passing from triumph to triumph. They dedicated themselves to this art, and soon built up here a true and distinctive school of stone-carving from which issued in great numbers the most exquisite works of ornamentation and composition. The art of the Settignanesi masters had a character peculiarly its own and local, above all in connection with its decorative character,



in which it preserved constantly a type of spontaneous ingenuity associated with the high skill and good taste of the workers."

Notable examples of the work of these Settignano sculptors are the Marzuppinì tomb in Santa



"A most useful village fountain, where all day long women and children fill their straw-covered fiaschi and exchange the gossip of the day."

Croce, by Desiderio, the Bruini tomb in the same church by Bernardo Rossellino, and the Portogallo tomb in San Miniato by Antonio Rossellino.

Immediately on descending in Settignano from the Florence tram one finds oneself on the edge of the Piazza Niccolò Tommaseo and nearly in face of the church of Santa Maria a Settignano. In the middle of the piazza is a most useful old village fountain, where all day long women and children fill their straw-covered fiaschi and exchange the gossip of the



day. This Niccolò Tommaseo, whose statue by Leopold Costali adorns the piazza, was a patriot and scholar who spent the last years of his life in the village. Within the church are several interesting works of art: a *tavola* representing the Resurrection by Manzuoli da S. Friano; a *tela* figuring the Last Supper by Andrea Commodi; several frescoes in the manner of Cigoli (near a statue of S. Lucia); other frescoes by Piero Dandini in the choir; a group in glazed terra-cotta representing the Madonna and Child between two angels, a work in the last manner of Andrea della Robbia and his son Giovanni; and finally a marble ciborium, a delicate piece of ornamental sculpture of the thirteenth century. The pulpit was designed by Bernardo Buonalenti. In the oratorio of Santa Trinità adjoining the church is a marble bas-relief of Madonna and Child, a work either of Desiderio's own or of some gifted Settignanoese imitator of the master.

In a corner of the piazza near the street is a much-mutilated rough statue of the Roman emperor Septimius Severus, put up in 1559. It was erected, according to Carocci, to consecrate the tradition of the founding of the village by Severus. But the traces of antiquity visible in certain fragments bearing inscriptions point to a much earlier settlement of the place. It is probable that the name Settignano is derived from a family Settimia that had here, in the flowery days of the Roman colony at Fiesole, their major possessions.

By a dropping road or pathway leading north from the iron gates just at the end of the tram line,

one comes in a few rods to the Villa Versé, one of the largest and most beautifully situated of the Settignano villas. Its special interest lies, however, in its association with the name of Meo del Francesco del Caprina, who was born here in 1430 and whose numerous works of sculpture are to be found in Rome and other Italian cities. The villa and its extensive poderi later belonged to the Marchese Buondelmonte.

Among all the villas in or near our village, however, that called "La Gamberaia" is easily first. To see it and its marvelous avenue of towering cypresses, and its box-hedge so broad across its clipped top that a carriage might drive on it, is fully worth a visit to Settignano. As its present owner, the Principessa Gyka, lives in great seclusion and seldom leaves the villa, opportunity is rare to enter the elaborate formal garden or to see the interior of the great house, with its wealth of decoration and its majesty of great halls and high ceilings. The entrance hall is eighty by thirty feet, and salone and dining-room are in similar proportions of grandeur. The garden is four hundred yards long along its eastern face and contains an unusual number of fountains and pools, for Gamberaia has a famous water supply.

But even if one does not enter, he may see very well from the roadway the villa and garden, the massive building weathered and stained to beautiful soft shades of yellowish, almost orange when the afternoon sun is fully on its face. Gigantic but slender cypresses tower darkly out of the grounds



Photo, Polhemus

THE CYPRESSES OF VILLA GAMBERAIA



and march in double column high above the tunneling roadway and on up the gentle hill-slope to a curious grotto pool. Böcklin's wonderful "Island of Death" cypresses might have had this Gamberaia group for inspiration. It is indeed quite possible that they did, for the artist lived for some time in a villa not far away.

Gamberaia has in its history, too, a certain amount of interesting association. The brothers Rossellino, already mentioned as, next to Desiderio, Settignano's most famous sculptor sons, were two of the five children of Matteo di Domenico, called the Borra stone-cutter, who lived here in the first part of the fifteenth century. The place was then known as Gamberelli. All these five children were boys and all followed the profession of the father. Two, Domenico and Tommaso, did not rise above the rank and file of Settignanese stone-workers; a third, Giovanni, became known as an unusually capable sculptor and architect; but the remaining two, Bernardo, born in 1409, and Antonio, born in 1427, came to take their place among the best of the Florentine names of the golden century. For what reason they were known under the name of Rossellino rather than under their father's seems untold, but this is an incident common to the history of many of the famous Italian artists.

Later Bernardo sold Gamberaia to one Domenico di Jacopo Riccialbarri, who must have enlarged and beautified the modest house of the artists; for from this time on the place is known in local history as the "Palace of Gamberaia." The subsequent

changes of ownership are of no particular interest, except perhaps the falling of the property into the hands of the two famous Florentine families of the Cerretani and the Capponi in the eighteenth century. The Capponi soon had entire ownership and in their hands the garden was greatly enriched with statues, grottoes, fountains, and other embellishments. In the nineteenth century Prince Louis Napoleon, afterward Napoleon III, lived in the villa for several months.

In the chapter "Our Villa" mention has been made of a group of four other Settignano villas lying



The church of the *frati Olivetani* at Settignano.

closely together on the south hill-slope that drops swiftly down to the Arno, the four villas of Chiesa, Porzuincola, Capponcino, and Viviani, associated with the names of Michelangelo, Eleonora Duse, Gabriele d'Annunzio, and Mark Twain, respectively. And still other Settignano houses associated with names known in art or lit-

erature might be mentioned. However, the special charm of Settignano is its out-of-doors. Farms





Photo. Author

CYPRESSES ON SETTIGNANO HILL ABOVE VAL D'ARNO



and orchards and vineyards are all about it, and from its hill-paths are glorious views of Arno valley and its inclosing mountains.

Take the road past Gamberaia that dips in a short, cavern-like tunnel under the cypress avenue and winds up and along the hill-side beyond. It is lined by the ever-present stone walls of the Italian highways, but they are low and you can look over them into the fields and orchards on either hand, and see scarred olive trees, the looping vines, and the grain with its scattered red poppies and corn-flowers. In a little way you come out upon a shoulder of the hill, and there you can sit on the wall in front of the curious old roadway shrine and look out between two lifting cypresses standing like mute guardians on either side of a gate. It is a wonderful view of the Arno from here. It can be traced all the way to and through Florence and beyond, lying in its broad valley on its way to the sea. On its right rise the Pistojesse mountains where so many Florentines make their summer *villeggiature*. On the left, that is on the south, lift the rugged Carrara; those marble mountains where Michelangelo dug out his blocks. Directly across the river and narrow valley in front of you are the rounding hills dotted with innumerable white villas, scattered churches with their square bell-towers, and every here and there a village nestling in a hollow or clinging to the slopes. The horizon is an uneven line of hilltops with passes or hollows between, and this sinuous crest-line is cut by towers or tall trees that etch themselves against the blue or white or gray of the sky. And everywhere close about you

it is all fresh and verdurous this spring day, and full of delicate color and soft calls of distant bells.

If you are more ambitious and would see a larger world you can turn your back on the two cypresses that frame the Arno and climb up the stony path through the podere to the very summit of the hill. Resting there under the young cypresses and great umbrella pines, one can look east across the Arno to Vallombrosa and its forests, or north to the distant snow-topped Apennines, and west to the bold peaks of the Apuan Alps. New valleys and new villages are in the view and you can people them all with marching armies and strew them with ancient adventure. For in truth armies marched and adventure came on all these Tuscan hills and valleys.

## CHAPTER VI

### BEGINNING TO SEE FLORENCE

#### PIAZZA DEL DUOMO

THE Piazza del Duomo is to us the beginning and the ending of Florence; for it is there we disembark when we come in by tram from Settignano, and it is there we take passage again for home after a half-day's sightseeing or shopping or just strolling the streets. Our rule is to do but one thing on one trip, that is, go to one church or one gallery, or hunt out one stray fresco. We get more impression from the things seen in this way than if we attempted the Herculean tasks assigned to the "morning of the fourth day" or "sights of the western quarters." But we do not stick to our rule with entire fidelity. Tradition and the inertia which require initiative and decision to overcome still hold us in a measure to the approved manner of sightseeing work. The tasks of the morning of the fourth day are too well established to be discarded or avoided on mere recognition of their foolishness.

The truth is, Baedeker and Baedekerism are too much with almost all of us who are traveling the well-worn trails of culture by sightseeing. It is a serious mistake to make a complete surrender to Baedeker.

He is the most useful but the most abused, the most helpful but most harmful, the most instructive but most subversive of friends.

So many days, so many churches. My tired-eyed, limp-shouldered friend, Smith, whom I met in the Settignano tram as he was returning after a rebellious day's escape from Florence and frantic joy in the country hill-paths, said: "They say there's four hundred churches in Rome. Well, I guess we done 'em all. But Ma's not been very well here and we're goin' to miss some of the Florence ones. Anyway, I kind o' like to see the country occasionally. Don't you?"

It is well to see the country occasionally. Or even to see nothing. And those are the times when one is likely to see things that will stick in the memory when the Uffizi has become a hazy blend of color and a composite photograph, badly printed, of saints, sinners, Christ children, and Madonnas.

Nine out of ten of us have no real interest in ninety out of one hundred of the Baedeker appreciations. We haven't the technical knowledge or the experience to understand and enjoy the points in the artistry that determine the stars. Galleries and cathedrals can be and are enjoyed by uneducated people, but this enjoyment comes from the impressions, the personal discoveries, the slowly awakening and growing art sense; the appreciation of the whole thing rather than the perception or understanding of the points of masterly technic or the traces of this or that school or manner.

Another point about good seeing is that connected



with the mental mood and physical condition of the see-er. An astronomer, clothed in two sweaters and an overcoat, and lying in a great, dark, bare bell of a room on a wooden rack under the eye-piece of his thirty-inch refractor, murmurs a prayer for "good seeing." He means by this a dark night, and clear, with no wind, and in himself the patience, the enthusiasm, the eager eye and brain that will not only hold him to his lonely vigil through half a long night, but will make this vigil a joy and a revelation; he prays for a good opportunity and a good use of it.

Just so the achiever of culture along the lines suggested by Cook and approved by Baedeker must pray for "good seeing." The opportunity is most certain to be good; his use of the opportunity depends upon many things. Two of these are certainly mental mood and physical condition. And who is he that can rely on the steadfastness of his mood and stomach for the perfect succession of days assumed by the guide-book? On the "morning of the fourth day," lying in bed is perhaps the very best thing one can do toward acquiring culture. If so, much better do it than groan through the tasks appointed for that precious period.

On a Sunday morning in the densely-packed rooms of the Pitti as one of a vast concourse of people all mumbling, mumbling rapidly the lesson of the morning of the fourth day from the red-backed book of commonplaceness, we may excuse ourselves; for our souls haven't much chance anyway and we are at least backed up in our mistaken religion by the other believers. But for the other times, alone in a great

still church, before a carven tomb, or in an old monastery room of frescoed walls, or a half-empty gallery some fortunate morning hour, why not put aside the faithful book companion and try a flight with the artist all unchaperoned? There is a real joy in just surrendering to the spirit of the artist who has revealed his God-touched soul in blossomed marble or rainbow-touched canvas—and in seeing what *we* see and feeling what *we* feel.

It is high time to return to our nearly forgotten mutttons, the sights of the Piazza del Duomo. A Florentine once asked me, "Do you really like the Duomo? Do you like it as well as Milan's cathedral?" That I assume presupposes a certain confessed lack of unanimity of like or dislike of Florence's great church. I am glad, for I should be sorry to confess alone to some disappointment in this enormous creation of Arnolfo and Brunelleschi. Not with its bigness, for its bigness is real, even if hard to appreciate without repeated seeing, walking all around it occasionally, and above all without occasional looking down from San Miniato or Bellosguardo on it, rearing almost grotesquely immense from the huddled city. Then it is that the great dome becomes truly great; that it lifts and expands and soars. And then, also, it reveals its beauty despite its size, its lines that satisfy, that make a heavy thing light, a big thing graceful.

It is hard to comprehend the size of any enormous thing, anything so unusually big that one's customary standards of measure fail to serve. Does one realize the bigness of St. Peter's, or the Paris Opera, or

the Cologne Cathedral? You must try to get at it indirectly. You look at the doves in St. Peter's and remember that they are carved as large as eagles. You walk slowly around, measuring with outstretched arms, one of the nave columns under the towers of Cologne's Dom. You recall how many hundreds of doors there are in the Opera. Even to experienced mountaineers the sheer half-mile and more of vertical cliff of El Capitan in the Yosemite is an uncomprehended bigness.

But the Florence Duomo has more than size of dome to consider. Does one like its striped exterior, its vari-colored façade, its interior plainness? As to the striping and coloring of walls and façade that is a matter not of the Florentine duomo alone, of course, but of most of the great churches of Tuscany and Umbria. For myself, these churches, or any others in Italy, are infinitely less beautiful than the cathedrals of France, of Germany, and England. As Hopital points out, the Italian cathedrals are all hurt by the hampering of their architects by old tradition. Roman style is mixed with Gothic inspiration, while the pure Gothic of the French and English churches is the free expression of the untrammelled architect. There is necessary more than a science of lines and dimensions for a cathedral; there is always needed a self-expressing Christian soul.

The Duomo stands now isolated in its piazza; free from attached or adjoining buildings. In this it has an advantage over some of the German cathedrals, Mainz for conspicuous example. But when it comes to isolation, to freedom from interference and harass-

ment by the jostling city, it is, of course, the English cathedrals, in their rich soft green closes, that have all the advantage. That isolation and quiet, that softness and beauty of setting make them the most



The Duomo and Campanile.

attractive and nearly perfect signs and abodes of the religious spirit in the world.

But there is the other point of view. To pass at one step from the clangor and rush and grime of the city; from the earthiness of the crowded piazza to the heavenliness of the great duomo's spacious quiet and rest and cooling breath; does or does it not outweigh in beauty of contrast and lesson to man the more remote influence of the cathedral of the close?

The interior of the Florentine duomo is plain and not beautiful, but it gives a certain satisfaction by its

spaciousness and lines and by its few but mostly good monuments and windows. It has been much criticised for its lack of religious feeling. Rio says that one entering by the grand portal who wishes to pray or meditate has to walk more than a hundred meters through a great flat, naked, dry nave before he finds a place for his devotions. Hopital calls it a great cathedral, brilliant without, dark and cold within, where the Christian loses himself in seeking God, and the uninformed tourist has trouble in understanding. "Under the dome is a sort of *grande piscine*, surrounded by a marble balustrade (the isolated choir) to which are relegated the good God and the priests; the rest of the church is a hall in which one knows neither where nor how to pray."

Of the monuments, the one immeasurably first in interest is that last work of sculpture of Michelangelo, an unfinished Pièta. It has a tenderness of expression in grouping and faces that makes, in the half-light behind the great altar where the marble stands, a wonderfully strong impression. The rugged artist, the man of force and iron who delighted to portray force and iron in human muscle and torso, knew sorrow and softness as well. Grimm's account of the shaping of this last work of the master is interesting.

"There was," he says, "in Michelangelo's atelier at Macello dei Corvi a marble group—Christ lying dead on his mother's lap, and Joseph of Arimathea standing by her side—which he had begun about 1545 and continued working at slowly for himself. He only undertook it that he might have something



at hand for his leisure hours. Vasari relates how he had once been sent by the Pope to Michelangelo, on account of some drawing somewhere about 1550, and had found him at this work. It was dark. Michelangelo, however, who knew Vasari by his manner of knocking, came out with a lantern to see what was wanted. Urbino was thereupon sent to the upper story to fetch the wanted sheet, but Vasari tried while he was waiting to catch a glimpse of the group by the limited light, and he looked at the leg of Christ, at which Michelangelo was then working. Scarcely, however, had the latter observed where Vasari was looking than he let the lantern fall, so that it went out, leaving both in darkness. He then called to Urbino, the faithful old servant, to bring a light, and as he and Vasari left the partition in which the group stood, he said, 'I am so old that Death often pulls me by the coat to come with him, and some day I shall fall down like this lantern and my last spark of life will be extinguished.'

"Often in the middle of the night, if he could not sleep, he would get up and work at this last task. That he might have a good light for doing so, and yet not be himself hindered by it, he had a kind of pasteboard cap made, on the top of which he fixed a tallow candle which would not drop like wax, and which was not in his way. He left the group, however, unfinished, because he discovered a flaw in the marble. He intended to break it to pieces, but he gave it afterwards to one of his young men. It is now in Florence under the dome of Santa Maria del Fiore with the inscription beneath it that it is Michel-



angelo's last work. The place is not unfavorable. The dim light that prevails there suits the group, which is only finished in its general mass."

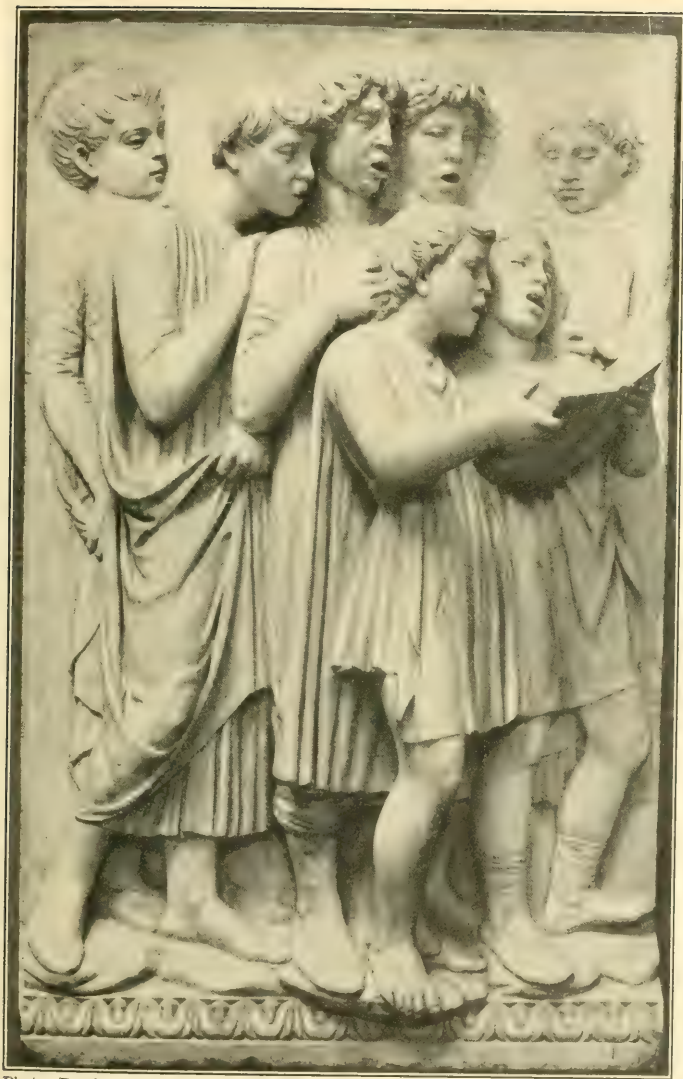
On the entrance (west) wall at either side of the great portal are two tall tombs, equestrian portraits in grisaille of two most unchurchly heroes; one, the famous English soldier-adventurer, John Hawkwood, who fought for Florence for a price, in a time of her great need—he fought against her first,—and the other, the Italian *condottiero* Niccolò da Tolentino. The Hawkwood portrait is by Paolo Uccello, the Niccolò by Andrea del Castagno. In the right aisle there is a portrait monument to Brunelleschi by Buggiano, and a bust of Giotto by Benedetto da Maiano. In the left aisle is a curious picture by Domenico di Michelino, including a portrait of Dante, a view of old Florence, and a scene from the Divine Comedy. In this also is a statue by Donatello. The bronze door of the north sacristy and a terra-cotta relief of the Resurrection over it are by Luca della Robbia, as is also a relief of the Ascension over the door of the south sacristy. The stained-glass windows are by Ghiberti, Donatello, Paolo Uccello, A. Gaddi, and others. The marble screen around the octagonal choir, and its figures in low relief, were designed by Baccio d'Agnolo. The frescoes in the dome ceiling were begun by Vasari and finished by Zuccherò.

To appreciate fully the interior of any cathedral it is necessary to see it under two conditions. First one should see and sit in it and walk slowly about it when it is empty, save for the few silent worshipers

kneeling here and there before the altars in the chapels. Then he should see it at High Mass on some day of *fiesta* when all the world is there; when the Cardinal or Archbishop is officiating, and the whole chapter is assisting; when the organ and the chanting voices, the choir, and perhaps the aiding orchestra, are filling it with rolling sound; when the sun rays from the clerestory windows slant, glistening and solid-golden, through the haze of odorous smoke, and the rich vestments of the priests hang heavy down the broad backs, the tall miter of the Cardinal is slowly doffed and donned, and the tinkling bell of the Host sends a great multitude to its knees in reverent or awesome silence. When we heard the Mass of San Giovanni Battista in Florence's duomo, we got a new idea of its greatness, and its glory, as one must under similar circumstances of any cathedral.

The dome seen from the inside repeats again much of the impression of beauty and stateliness that it gives from the outside. Indeed, the dome is *the* thing about the Duomo, and there is hardly anything more interesting reading in the history of Florentine happenings than the story of how Brunelleschi built it. And we like to see him each time we visit the Piazza sitting there in his stone chair by the wall of the Misericordia, with his eyes lifted to his triumph.

When you have read the story—you will find it in Vasari—you will like to go into the Cathedral Museum on the piazza opposite the choir of the Duomo and see there the various models and designs, including Brunelleschi's own for the lantern, made from early to modern times in connection with the



Photo, Brogi

### SINGING BOYS

Luca della Robbia: Duomo Museum



church's building. And there are those famous singing galleries of Luca della Robbia and Donatello, and the silver altar from the Baptistry. What a caroling chorus is della Robbia's! what a mad romp of chubby legs and arms is Donatello's! You open your mouth to sing aloud as you face the one; you balance on your toes to pirouette and spring as you turn to the other.

Opposite the modern façade of many colors of the Cathedral, the Baptistry lifts its ancient walls. It dates from about 600 and is the church of San Giovanni Battista, the patron saint of Florence. The Duomo's real name, by the way, is the church of Santa Maria del Fiore (Saint Mary of the Flower), the name being got, it is said, from the sending to the Cathedral, by Pope Eugenio IV, of a golden rose "by great courtesy as to a princess." The church under this name belonged for a long time to the powerful wool-weavers' guild.

At the east front of the Baptistry, before the closed bronze doors and between the two broken and iron-bound red porphyry pillars that came from Pisa eight hundred years ago, there is always a little elbowing, neck-craning crowd. About it cluster cabmen and venders of postal cards, medallions, and trinkets. Above it lift gesticulating, pointing hands. Other hands hold up the red-backed books, and all languages murmur the stories of the panels, the name of the artist, the date of his success, and lastly, perhaps, the curt sentence that half a man's working lifetime was given to the fashioning of these doors. It must all be very gratifying to Ghiberti's shade to see this appre-

ciation of his genius and his industry; this shifting, ever-flowing, and changing group, coming from and dispersing to the four quarters of the earth, and carrying with it the memory of ten minutes spent before his achievement. But it must be just a bit ludicrous to this eternal shade to note a certain disproportion in the time devoted to producing and that given to appreciation.

But there are some who come again and again to this picture gallery in the side of the Baptistry, this garden of sculpture in bronze on a doorway, these gates of Paradise, or worthy to be them, as Michelangelo shall have said. The old sacristan of Santa Annunziata—the most interesting sacristan in Florence—as he placed us before the wonderful panels of Giovanni da Bologna in his church, murmured that if Michelangelo had only seen these panels after he had uttered his famous praise of Ghiberti's doors, he would have had to say of Bologna's work that it was worthy of something beyond Paradise. And there are also Donatello's bronze reliefs on one of the two stairless pulpits in San Lorenzo. But the voice of the world has declared, with Michelangelo, for Ghiberti, and hence this ever-forming, melting, and re-forming group of pilgrims by the east face of the Baptistry.

Outside there are still to see Ghiberti's other earlier doors on the north; and Andrea Pisano's, on the south, still earlier and, to some, most interesting of all. Inside the Baptistry there is not much that catches the casual eye, although all there is, even to the sacred emptiness itself, echoes with the low rever-



berations of history and historic names. There are the thirteenth century mosaics in the choir, the tomb of Pope John XXIII by Donatello and Michelozzo, the wooden statue of Mary Magdalen by Donatello, the antique columns, the old black and white marble floor, and the great font in which generations of Florentines have been baptized.

On the occasion of the same festal Mass at which we "assisted" in the Cathedral, the famous relics of the Baptistry were exposed under glass in a golden casket, set up for the adoration of the multitude. A constant stream of worshipers crowded by the casket, most of them kissing its glass face. Some with certain doubts, perhaps, as to the efficacy of the relics in a struggle against the danger of microbic infection, contented themselves with rubbing their calloused or gloved finger-tips against the sacred object. When the Archbishop finally came, under an umbrella of green silk, from the Cathedral for his prostration before the relics the kissing was turned to him, and his rich skirts and extended hands were touched by scores of reverent lips as he slowly passed along.

As we came to the Piazza one day just at noon, the great bell in Giotto's campanile began tolling and all the time we were in sound of it the tolling continued. It sounded from twelve to one o'clock, which proclaimed the death of a priest of the Duomo chapter. Had this passing soul been that of a higher prelate, two hours of the bell's tolling would have been wafted after it. This bell tells the hours to all Florence, and it calls a mystic cryptogram to the black-cowled Misericordia in times of special need of

their services. The house of the Misericordia, the brotherhood of pity, on the south side of the Piazza was formerly used for the Florence Court of Trustees. "The beautiful Loggia [del Bigallo] opposite the Baptistry was built for them by Orcagna," says Mrs. Ross in her excellent account of the brotherhood in "Old Florence and Modern Tuscany," "but fell to the Bigallo [another confraternity] in 1523." In the present chapel of the Misericordia there is a beautiful altar-piece by Luca della Robbia and "in the secretary's room a curious picture by Cigoli of the Piazza del Duomo during the great plague." In the delicate little Bigallo there is a fresco attributed to Giotto and with it a few other collected pictures and sculptures. But the beauty and joy of the Bigallo lies in its exterior. It is one of the most charming bits of architecture in all Florence.

The Misericordia become such familiar figures to any repeated visitor to the Piazza—and are met so often here and there in the streets in a little group about a low, coffin-like hand carriage which they are trundling along,—that a further word about them ought to be of interest. They constitute a charitable order, not connected with any church and founded, according to tradition, in 1240. Their benevolence takes the form of a free service to the poor sick and dead of the city, whom they take in wheeled litters from house to hospital or cemetery. They also act as free nurses to the poor in their own houses. They are voluntary workers recruited from all ranks of the citizens, and are organized with four groups

or degrees: the Capi di Guardia of seventy-two members, and the Giornanti or day-workers, the Stracciafogie (paper-tearers) and Buonevoglii (well-intentioned) of several hundred members. "No apprentice is admitted into the confraternity without his master's consent, nor any youth under age, save by his father's wish. No servant in livery can belong to it, nor can any barber, hairdresser, coachman, cobbler, seller of fish or of salt meats and sausages, or any person following a trade which is considered mean or vile. No man can belong to the Misericordia who has been condemned in a court of law, or is notoriously an evil liver" (Ross).

Over the Duomo and the Baptistry, the Bigallo and the Misericordia, over the swift, picturesque life of the whole crowded piazza lifts the pride of the city, the triumph of Giotto, the campanile that has been the special glory of Florence for more than five centuries. No degree of audacity ought to warrant a single attempted new word or phrase of description of this dream-tower in rose and white and green, this "tower worked like a lace and ornamented like a precious furniture, that rises with a bold and pure thrust toward the sky and bears there the sonorous prayer of its bells."

Joseph Hopital believes he has discovered the symbolism of this precious campanile. It is the progressive ascent of the soul toward the celestial ideal. Its four stages form four degrees of a mystic stair. The first, or lowest, without windows, bears reliefs relating to things of the earth, to man's earthly life. The second stage is made lighter by a double-pointed arch

one each side. One has quit the earth; one breathes a purer air. The statues are of prophets, sibyls, patriarchs, heralds inspired by immortal destinies. The third stage, still higher and with twin openings on each face, seems smaller and more delicate. It also bears sculptures of figures of the spirit. Finally, at the summit is the belfry, with its great open arches and its bells in the pure light and free air.

One midnight, after a festa day, we saw the tower illuminated; not boldly, glaringly, like an exposition tower all pricked out in electric flashes, but modestly, delicately, from within, by a few scattered lamps. It was simply made softly radiant, as old stone phosphorescent in the night. Its fragile sculptures seemed curious natural outgrowths on its walls, its slight pilasters and casings, all indistinct in the evanescence, lost their regularity and rigor of repetition, and this triumph of the hand and brain of man, rising from the dark walled-in space of the piazza, seemed to transform into a great slender pink and white stalagmite, lifting from the floor of some vast cave and illumined by its own mysterious radiance.

Swirling about the bases of these centuries-old monuments to the hands and brains and souls of wonderful dead Florentines, and mingling its medley of sounds with the clear tones of the tower bells, is the flowing life of Florence to-day; the clangor and grinding of the electric trams which run on every side of the Duomo and make their very headquarters under the campanile, the calls of venders of *giornale* and tickets of *tombola*, the ebb and flow of the curious tourists with their attendant horde of crying cab-

men, guides, and souvenir sellers, the laugh and chatter of the idlers under the canopies of the sidewalk cafés, the portentous coming and going of the black-robed Misericordia.

We leave it, this throbbing piazza, with regret each time the fading day calls us to our hill-side home. And no sooner are we come to our vine-covered house of quiet and rest and fragrant airs than we turn and look down upon the city at our feet and see again the great dome and slender tower of bells. And as night comes on we sit and watch the lights burst out in the street and open square, and pick out again on the star-studded map of the city that focal spot of all that Florence was and is.

## CHAPTER VII

### THE CHURCHES

#### THE SMALL ONES

THE churches of Florence may be conveniently grouped into the large ones and the smaller ones; categories not based on esthetic distinctions, to be sure, but on easily seized and much-used ones. For not Americans alone use size and cost as distinctions of interest and merit. As one walks down the long nave of St. Peter's one sees marks that indicate where various other great cathedral naves would reach; here Milan, here St. Paul's, here Cologne, silent witnesses to the material bigness of this church of the Popes.

There are not four hundred churches in Florence, as my hard-working tourist friend, Mr. Smith, thinks he found in Rome. Indeed, in the group of larger churches there are but five besides the Duomo, namely: Santa Croce, San Lorenzo, Santa Maria Novella, Santissima Annunziata, and Santo Spirito. The smaller ones are fifty, more or less, of which the Badia, Or San Michele, Santa Trinità, Ognissanti, San Marco, Santa Maria del Carmine, Santi Apostoli, and Sant' Ambrogio are most interesting either because of their beauty of architecture, or of their





Photo. Brogi

VIRGIN AND ST. BENEDICT  
Filippino Lippi: Badia



contained treasures of painting and sculpture. However, the special interest of San Marco Church is neither that of form nor interior frescoes and statues, but wholly an interest of historical association. It is the church of the monastery of Savonarola and Fra Angelico.

No one can be looking at Florence through spectacles more golden than mine just now, and yet it is hard for me to see in the Florence churches, especially in the larger and more pretentious ones, anything of the warmth or beauty of gold. That is, in the form and finish of the buildings themselves. There are no rarer or more beautiful church contents of frescoes and paintings, pulpits and tombs anywhere. So many were the Florentine geniuses of art, and so prodigal were they of their labors, that there is hardly any least church in the city but has some precious picture or marble. Take, for example, the little Badia opposite the Bargello. You enter by a door carved by Benedetto da Rovezzano under a lunette by Luca della Robbia. Within are exquisite wall-tombs by Mino da Fiesole and Benedetto da Maiano, and in the little Chapel of the Bianchi is Filippino Lippi's wonderful Madonna and St. Bernard. The splendid carved wooden ceiling is by Segaloni. All this in a small, bare interior, cubical in shape, with projecting recesses, and gray and plain to commonplaceness. How unassumingly this little box of a church holds its group of art treasures that a cathedral ten times its size and pretension to architectural glory might well envy.

Perhaps La Badia is an especially well endowed ex-

ample of the Florentine churches of the smaller size. But to take another at random, how many Continental cathedrals have anything to offer in the way of genuine creation comparable to the treasures of the Brancacci chapel in the church of the Carmine? In this chapel Masolino and his boy pupil of flashing genius, Masaccio, have left their best work, work that initiated and determined truth in art. Here Michelangelo is said to have studied, and here it is really certain many of the greatest names in Florentine art got both instruction and inspiration.

Along with Masolino and Masaccio's frescoes in the chapel are some by Filippino Lippi. Among these latter is a harrowingly realistic one of the martyrdom of St. Peter. The bleeding body is nailed head downward on a cross that is being lifted by a rope. In a central group of three figures in this picture the middle one, with its face looking out and with the finely lighted arched open doorway for a background, is the artist's own. Among Masaccio's pictures the expelling of Adam and Eve holds one's eyes longest. The two figures, crude and ill-drawn as they are—the right leg of Adam is an anatomical monstrosity—have a tremendous strength and convincingness. They come as near the core of the suffering as picture may. Of extraordinary quality also is the picture of the bringing of the Emperor's son to life, attributed to Masaccio and Lippi together. It holds a host of carefully drawn faces in realistic attitudes—a masterful composition.

In the sacristy of this church are some frescoes by Agnolo Gaddi, and in the choir is a marble tomb, by

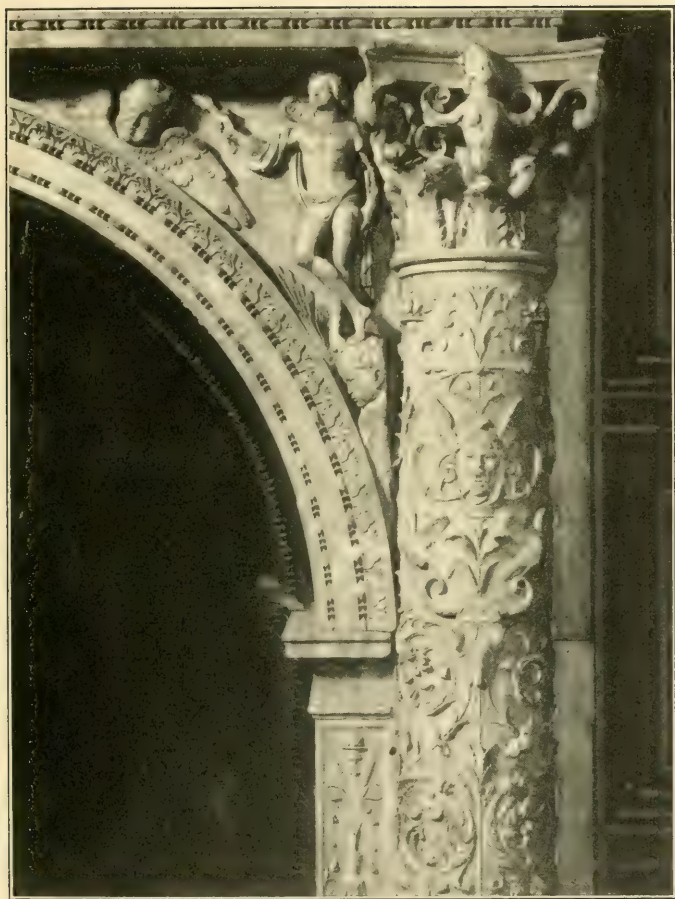


Photo. Alinari

DETAIL OF ALTAR  
Benedetto da Rovezzano: Santa Trinità





Benedetto da Rovezzano, of Piero Soderini, one of the historic *gonfalonieri* of Florence and representative in his life and family of much of Florentine history. Indeed, were one to close one's eyes entirely to the beauty of the paintings and sculptures of the Florentine churches and see in them only their historic significance, their interest would still be profound.

Another small church, Santa Trinità—said to have been called by Michelangelo his "sweetheart," as San Miniato is said to have been called his "bride"—is also unusually distinguished by its pictures and carvings. Conspicuous among them are Domenico Ghirlandajo's frescoes in the little Sassetti chapel (right of the choir). They represent scenes from the life of St. Francis and immediately impel the visitor to compare them with Giotto's similar series in Santa Croce. The comparison may be concentrated on the two treatments of the death of the saint. The attempt of Ghirlandajo to relieve the necessary artificialness of the scene—for it seems there really must be one figure at each of the stigmata—by introducing numerous accessory figures lends but little toward its convincingness. It simply reveals the decadence in naïve belief and the artistic sophistication that came with a century and a half of years.

Other objects of interest in this church are a carved marble shrine (right of the central door) and marble altar (fifth chapel, right), by Benedetto da Rovezzano; an Annunciation by Lorenzo Monaco (fourth chapel, right); a crucifix and a strange wooden Magdalen (first chapel, left) by Desiderio da Settignano;

a beautiful tomb of a bishop of Fiesole (second chapel left of the choir) by Luca della Robbia; and finally the crucifix of San Giovanni Gualberto "originally in San Miniato, and brought thence in great state (1671) by order of Duke Cosimo III. The Christ is related to have bowed the head on the day when San Giovanni pardoned his brother's murderer." The interior of the church itself will have to most an unmistakable charm and religious feeling.

Not all of the smaller Florentine churches are plain and simple inside like the Badia, the Carmine, and Santa Trinità. Ognissanti, for example, has a tawdry decorated interior. But this does not prevent one from getting much pleasure from a visit to it. It has a beautiful fresco by Ghirlandajo of the Descent from the Cross, with a lunette above it of our Lady of Mercy, "sheltering members of the Vespucci family." Besides this chief prize there is also a fresco by Ghirlandajo of St. Jerome and one of St. Augustine by Botticelli (opposite each other on the sides of the nave). Botticelli is buried in the church.

Of special interest to Americans in Ognissanti is the tomb of Amerigo Vespucci, the navigator. In the wall above the grave is the curious Vespucci coat-of-arms, with its seven wasps. One can indulge oneself before this grave in musing over the significance of the rolling tide of Americans that passes constantly over the worn covering stone of this bold, solitary visitor to America four hundred years ago. So well returned is this visit nowadays that a material part of the financial support of Vespucci's poorer country

comes from these restless wanderers from the newer land.

The refectory of the old convent of Ognissanti (entered by a separate door on the street) contains a Last Supper by Ghirlandajo (see the chapter "Stray Pictures on Monastery Walls").

In the very heart of the business and social activity of Florence—just a step off the Piazza Vittorio Emanuele—one may pass through a swinging door out of the noise and glare of the populous piazza into the beautiful dim quiet of a chapel of fascinating attractiveness, the sanctuary of Or San Michele. This single square, groined room at the bottom of the towering memorial building of the Florentine guilds of the fourteenth century is a priceless jewel box containing a priceless jewel, the famous shrine or tabernacle of Orcagna.

This votive offering commemorates the cessation of a plague and is the sum of twelve years of ceaseless labor. It is a mosaic-incrusted, marble structure, domed, pinnacled, and sculptured, that stands easily first in its originality and beauty among the many tabernacles of Italy. Around its base is a running series of exquisite marble reliefs inclosed in hexagonal and octagonal frames, while at its back is a larger relief covering the whole surface. The shrine shelters a painting of the Madonna and Child by Ugo of Siena. An iron grill about the base bears at its angles tall slender columns with angels and candles. The tabernacle should be seen, if possible, on a bright day when the sunlight makes gold of it. Then all the delicacy and marvel of the sculpturing can be appre-

ciated. At other times a boy with lighted candle will show you the reliefs, naïvely telling their tale and tenderly rubbing and patting the little figures as he talks.

But it was not as the housing of a unique gem of art that Or San Michele first became known to us; but rather as a chapel filled at candle-light with a reverent and spellbound group of worshippers. They overflowed the few benches, and sat on the altar steps or stood leaning against pillars or dimly outlined in shadowy corners and crowding about the very feet of the preacher himself. We slipped in quietly as sightseers, and were soon merged into the tranced group held by the spell of the scene, the hour, and the eager passionate voice of the preacher. It was twilight of the day of San Giovanni Battista, and the tale and the exhortation came from the life of the ascetic saint of the wilderness. It was the call to simplicity and devotion, to faith and sacrifice. And yet it was almost daring in the liberality and enlightenment of its exposition. That priest should go far in the new Catholic Church, or be snuffed out soon by the still weighty hand of the reactionaries.

Since then Or San Michele has been our favorite place to realize that Italy's churches are not merely art museums nor yet altogether places of extravagant display and pompous religious ceremonial. High Mass is not the time or place to see revealed the true religious spirit of the rank and file of the Roman Catholic Church in Italy; the incense obscures the sight, the glittering robes distract it. But at vespers every night in the little churches and in the little

chapels of the big churches gather the thousands to recite and pray together under the fatherly guidance of some old silvery-haired priest with a little boy at his side. It is then that the Virgin and the Christ child are real, and the sacred wafer becomes in truth the Body.

I cannot go on with the enumeration of even the more interesting of the smaller churches. But one should not forget to find little Sant' Ambrogio with its beautiful altar by Mino da Fiesole, who is buried there; nor the ancient hidden-away church of the Santi Apostoli said to have been founded by Charlemagne! In it are a tomb by Benedetto da Rovezzano and a ciborium by the successors of the della Robbia.

There are others of the little churches, too, that well repay their seeking out; a graceful interior, a rare old picture, a curious pulpit or carved tomb, or a haunting memory of the famous men and women whose lives touched or whose mouldering bodies lie here. Much of the history of Florence, history that is romance realized, can be read from the monuments of the Florentine churches.

## CHAPTER VIII

### THE CHURCHES (CONTINUED)

#### THE LARGER ONES

THE tomb monuments spoken of at the close of the last chapter are most abundant in the larger churches. Santa Croce, for example, makes, if one may speak so irreverently, a specialty of them. On either hand, as one walks down the long nave, are the records in sculptured marble and carved words of Florentine history, while in the lofty chapels of transepts and apse are the frescoes that tell the double story of Florentine piety and genius.

Santa Croce is a spacious church; more than any other in Florence it gives something of that feeling of free largeness, of open extent, that one asks for in great churches. The wholly open nave and the aisles unbroken by side chapels, together with the extreme shallowness of apse and its adjoining chapels, make the whole length and breadth of the building immediately obvious. But the bare grayish and dirty white walls, the bleak and ugly side altars of Vasari, and the obtrusive modernity of many of the monuments emphasize a feeling of irritation which has been stirred up even before entrance by the sight of the staring new façade.



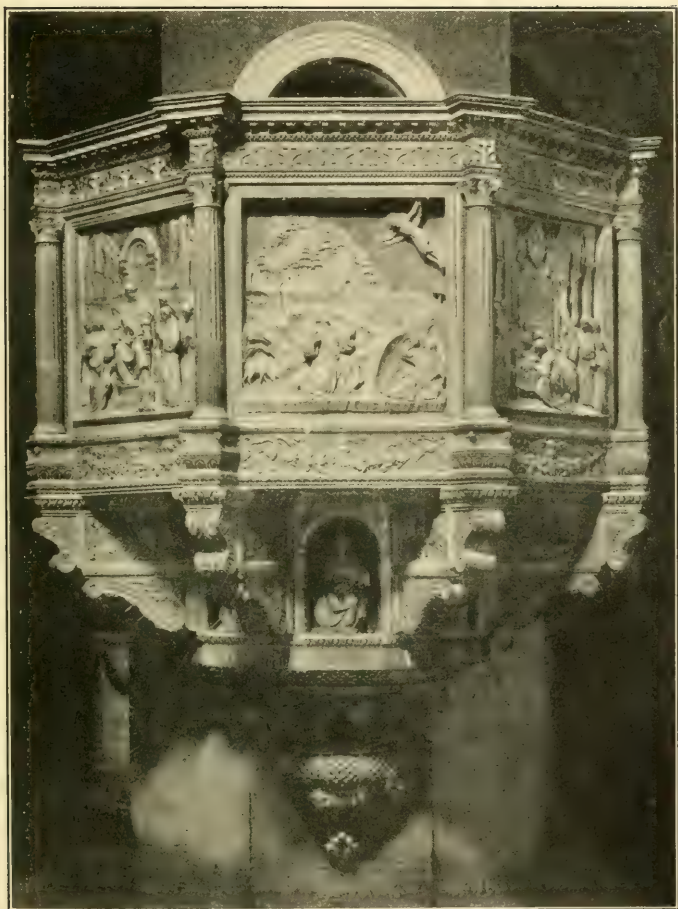


Photo. Alinari

**PULPIT**  
Benedetto da Maiano: Santa Croce



The farther one walks down the nave, however, the more allayed becomes this irritation because of the growing beauty of the lofty, narrow, shallow apse with its softly glowing fourteenth century windows and its frescoed walls, and the interesting glimpses of the Giotto pictures in the Bardi and Peruzzi chapels quiet and gratify. And finally just before reaching the transepts there are on either hand those precious pieces of decorative sculpture, the tombs of Marzupini and Bruini by Desiderio and Rossellino, the Settignano stone-carvers.

Indeed Santa Croce is exceptionally endowed with works of the sculptors of the decorative school. The beautiful pulpit, the most beautiful in Italy some have esteemed it, is by Benedetto da Maiano; while the charming relief of Madonna and Child on the first right-hand pillar of the nave is by Antonio Rossellino, younger brother of Bernardo who carved the Bruini tomb. Finally, Mino da Fiesole is represented by a tabernacle in the Medici chapel.

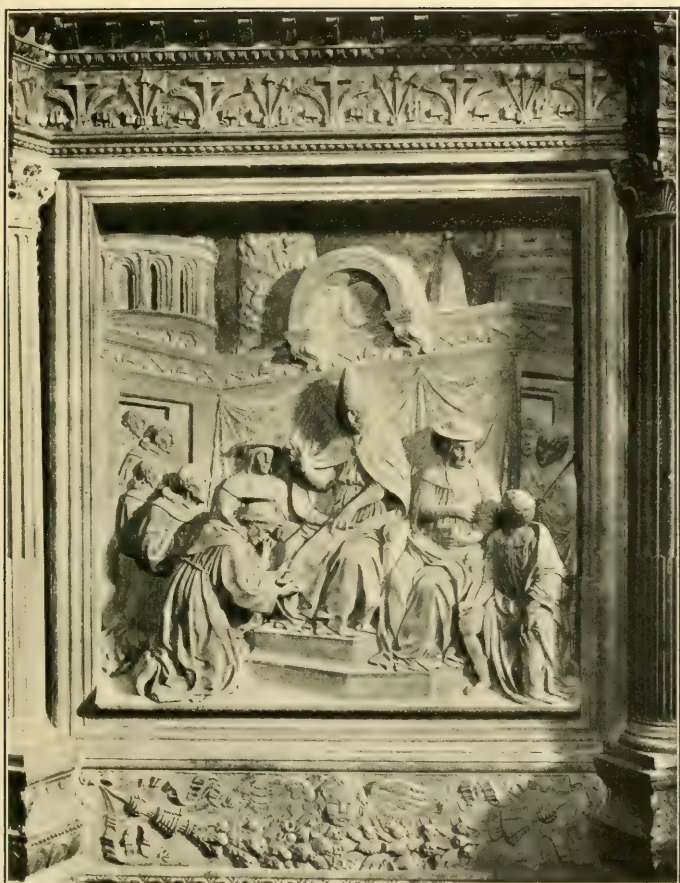
If only Dante, Galileo, Alfieri, Machiavelli, Rossini, Mazzini, Michelangelo, and the rest of the great ones buried here could have had tombs by these master carvers, what a wonder of beauty this Florentine pantheon would be. Indeed, if even a certain virtue of negation could have been exercised, and where Desiderio and the Rossellini could not carve, simple plates with the great names had been held sufficient!

Hopital exclaims of Michelangelo's tomb: "The creator of the grave monuments of the Medici condemned no doubt for expiation of his sins to sleep

under the work of a Vasari! Still he is less punished than his rival in glory, the painter of the delicate Madonnas, who wished that an image of the Virgin Mary should figure on his tomb, and whose bones in the Pantheon at Rome are crushed by a statue of a *grosse femme* of which the sight would have outraged him."

But let us be content with the positive blessings. Besides exquisite marbles and refulgent old glass (the beautiful rose window is from a design by Ghiberti) Santa Croce has its famous frescoes. Giotto's pictures, much restored, telling the stories of St. Francis and the two St. Johns, are in the first two chapels to the right of the apse, and Taddeo Gaddi's of the life of the Virgin and the Christ Child are in the Baroncelli chapel in the south transept. Of the Giotto frescoes only the drawing and composition can now be fairly attributed to the master, for the colors are mostly the restorers', although following, of course, Giotto's tints. The pictures can be seen very well, especially the lower ones, and next to the master's work at Padua and Assisi are his most important series.

With eyes filled by the piety and sweetness of Santa Croce's tombs and frescoes, one is likely to forget that it was this same great House of the Lord that housed the Florentine tribunal of the Inquisition and that was the plotting and bloodthirsty center of the clerical antagonism to Savonarola. One may wander slowly through the Medici chapel (built for Cosimo by Michelozzo) and the Pazzi chapel in the cloisters and through the great and lesser refectories,



Photo, Alinari

DETAIL OF THE PULPIT  
Benedetto da Maiano: Santa Croce





and, if he have good eyes, behold the moving scenes of Florentine history that passed here; the Pazzis plotting the Medici murder in the Duomo; the masked inquisitors condemning Acco d'Ascoli and Tommaso Crudeli to the pyre and holding their horrors so vividly before persecuted Galileo that for the moment the flesh overcomes the reason.

Servite Santissima Annunziata, "the richest church in the city," and Augustinian Santo Spirito, the church of the beautiful lines, may be referred to with some brevity. Santo Spirito is a fifteenth century church of Brunelleschi's design. Its beautiful campanile across the river grows more and more loved the more often it is seen—and all the dwellers along the north bank of the Arno from Ponte Vecchio to the Cascine see it every time they look from their windows. Its façade is unfinished—a pleasing relief after facing Santa Croce's finished one—and modern pictures of little interest replace the ancient treasures of most of its altars. But its spacious, perfectly proportioned interior, which has echoed to the voice of Martin Luther, if tradition be true, is restful, religious, and truly harmonious. In a chapel (third) in the west transept is a Madonna and Child by Filippino Lippi.

Santissima Annunziata is smaller than the other large churches, but the contracted appearance of its interior is due in part to the filling or replacement of its aisles by lateral chapels, and to the hiding of its large rotunda-like apsidal choir by a high altar under the tribune dome. In addition the church is crowded with elaborate decorations in the way of

banners, crimson hangings, golden and glass candelabra and the like. All this helps to make impossible any feeling of spaciousness that the actual size of the church might warrant. This richness of drapery decoration may be necessary to maintain the character of the church as the richest and most fashionable one in the city; but it effectively repels all interest in it as a thing of beauty or majesty. It contains, however, some admirable works.

On the walls of the arcaded court in front of the main entrance is an interesting series of frescoes by Andrea del Sarto. There are less interesting ones also by several other artists. Within the church, or rather over the door leading into it from the cloisters, is del Sarto's charming and celebrated *Madonna del Sacco*. There is also an *Assumption* by Perugino in a dark chapel on the left of the nave; a characteristic piece of sculpture by Bandinelli, a *Pietà* for his own tomb, in the right transept; and in the middle chapel in the rotunda choir behind the high altar are several beautiful bronze reliefs by Giovanni da Bologna (or his pupils). The church is the burial place of both Andrea del Sarto and Giovanni da Bologna.

At the left of the main entrance is the ornate shrine built for Piero de' Medici after Michelozzo's design. It is set about with great candles and many heavy, swinging, ever-burning brass lamps, the gifts of the noble families of the city. And the memory of this sumptuous thing is, on the whole, a fitting one with which to leave the church.

There are several small pictures by Giovanni Signorini in the modern gallery upstairs in the Ac-



Photo. Alinari

DEATH OF ST. FRANCIS  
Giotto: Santa Croce



cademia, which are of much interest, whether good paintings or not, for they reproduce scenes of carnival and festa life in old Florence. One of them shows the Piazza of Santa Maria Novella on a day of the chariot races. The banked seats, the crowded people,



Santa Maria Novella, "the great Dominican church that still dominates the now almost deserted piazza."

the chariots in their mad course in the limited space of the piazza making their dangerous turns about the goal pillars; all is very live.

Over this scene lifts the great Dominican church that still dominates the now almost deserted piazza, with its two pillars standing forlornly memorial of the old gay days. Perhaps the tomb niches in the façade and adjoining arcades were full then; they



are empty now. And the façade then could not have been so roughened by weather and grimed by smoke and dust as it is to-day. But it is still a beautiful front; certainly more beautiful than that of any other Florence church.

Within there is a softness of light and a fair openness that compensate for the uninteresting features that line the long nave. Only one of these arrests attention: Bernardo Rossellino's monument of the Beata Villana (right aisle near the second altar; formerly in the Rucellai chapel in the right transept). The holy maid is sleeping behind curtains that angels are drawing back.

But once the transepts are reached the passing interest of curiosity becomes changed to warm delight and eager enthusiasm. For here, at the head of the church, is concentrated a wonderful group of treasures.

Behind the parti-colored marble high altar lift the beautiful fifteenth century windows of the choir. This high but shallow and narrow choir is perhaps Santa Maria Novella's choicest spot; for all of its three walls are covered by Ghirlandajo's fascinating frescoes of Florentine men and women in Florentine costumes and setting, but arranged in the holy guise of scenes from the life of the Virgin and of John the Baptist. They have a most appealing naturalness and grace, and the softest and most varied of color harmonies. The faces and figures are as human as may be, and seem, someway, recognizable; indeed, many of them must have been really recognizable to Ghirlandajo's contemporaries. Most of the settings



for the figures are elaborately architectural, with arcades, walls, pillars, and decorated stairways.

More can be learned from such frescoes as these, and from the canvases of the Florentine painters, of the aspect of old Florence and its people than from many ponderous tomes of descriptive minutiae. Streets and piazzas and houses, costumes and manners, and the portrait faces of nobles and artists, poets and poet-sung women are all revealed in the convenient vehicle of scenes from Old and New Testament history.

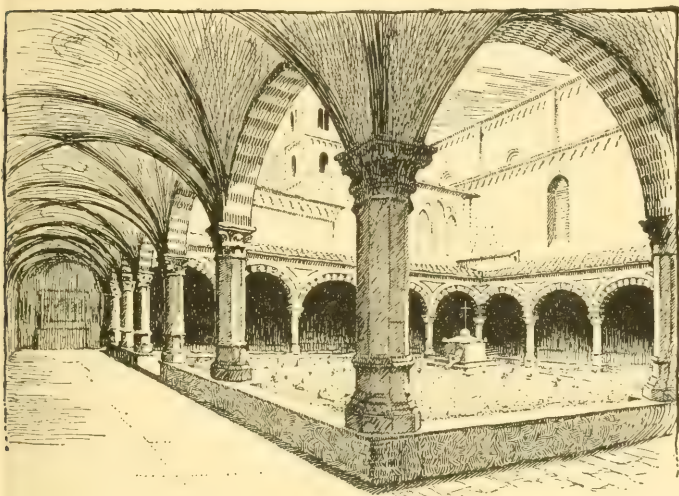
In the Strozzi chapel in the left transept are the famous frescoes by the brothers Orcagna of the Last Judgment (wall behind the altar), with its portrait of Dante, Heaven, with more than two hundred beatified faces, and Hell, with its seven circles of the damned enduring realistically their various effective tortures. We may be tempted to laugh at this naïve Hell, but the Florentines of the fourteenth century did not laugh at all at such pictures. And Orcagna was intent on saving his contemporaries, not us. Indeed, when looking at any of the old pictures we must keep in mind always the difference in theologic point of view between us and the Italians of six centuries ago. The ludicrous realities of the Day of Judgment, as seen in a picture of Fra Angelico or Orcagna, were the most believed-in things of the time. And the eternal joys of Heaven or the ceaseless writhings in Hell, as portrayed with impartial fidelity by the painter prophets of the old days, were as certainly then the fate of every man as to-day many hold a blank nothingness to be.

In the Gondi chapel (first to left of the choir) is the wooden crucifix of Brunelleschi, which is the subject of one of Vasari's pleasantly interesting, if not certainly truthful stories; that one which makes Donatello drop the breakfast eggs in amazement at this wonder work of his friend. In the Filippo Strozzi chapel (right of the choir) are some frescoes by Filippino Lippi, with curiously heavy scowling faces not at all like the more usual smoothness of this gamin genius. Here also is a marble tomb carved by Benedetto da Maiano. The four flying angels, the two winged heads of cherubim, and the appealing faces of the Madonna and Child in the *tondo*, all live in the flesh and blood translucence of old rubbed marble.

Up the steep stone stair in the right transept is the bare chapel of the Rucellai, with the ancient wonder picture of Cimabue, or, by the higher criticism, Duccio. The face of the Madonna, however, as indeed the whole picture, is most Cimabue-like in conception. The stories of the artist's great triumph in producing the picture, the king's visit to his humble studio to see it, and the procession of all the people which bore it to the church, lend it an interest which, to most, its actual self as work of art will lack. Yet some have found much expression in this "broad-faced Virgin" of the early days.

The remaining prides of Santa Maria Novella are the old cloisters, with the now nearly vanished naïve frescoes of Paolo Uccello and Dello Delli; and that Spanish Chapel on which Ruskin lavished such a special extravagance of praise. Even the untutored

visitor will recognize the great interest of these well-preserved and lively frescoes—religious rebuses, Joseph Hopital calls them—whether or not the subtleties of artistic genius reveal themselves to him. Indeed, there seems to be some difference of opinion



The cloisters of Santa Maria Novella.

among the tutored as to their actual art values. But the anecdotal values are certainly there; and the fresh colors, the realistic faces and attitudes, and the free play of naïve imagination make the frescoes among the most interesting in Florence.

Their subjects include such more usual scenes as the Crucifixion and the Resurrection, but also a number of allegories which are the pictures of most interest. On the right wall is imagined the triumph of the Church as represented and defined by the Dominicans.

In this picture the Dominicans as dogs are seen attacking and killing the heretics shown as wolves. On the left wall is the personal triumph of St. Thomas Aquinas with a remarkable allegorical series representing the various virtues, sciences, and phases of learning by female figures, with a corresponding series of conventional portrait faces of distinguished representatives of each of these aspects of virtue and learning; St. Augustine for charity, Justinian for civil law, Euclid for geometry, Cicero for rhetoric, and so on. The frescoes are commonly attributed to Taddeo Gaddi and Simone Memmi.

Cold and bare, outside and inside, is San Lorenzo, the great Medici-built church. Here lie the Medici tombs in which Michelangelo reached the height of his genius in sculpture. Indeed it were as well to call it a Michelangelo as a Medici church; for as architect and sculptor, the great artist gave an important part of his life to this historic structure. And here was held the magnificent funeral over his body when he returned to Florence, dead, after thirty years of voluntary exile in Rome.

Other great names of art are associated with the building and embellishing of San Lorenzo. Brunelleschi was the first architect, dying after seeing only the Old Sacristy completed. It is this part of the church which, next to the New Sacristy where the Michelangelo sculptures are, is the richest in its legacy of Renaissance art. For in it is a veritable museum of Donatello reliefs, busts, and statuettes, besides a pavement sarcophagus constructed by Cosimo the Elder to the memory of his parents. An

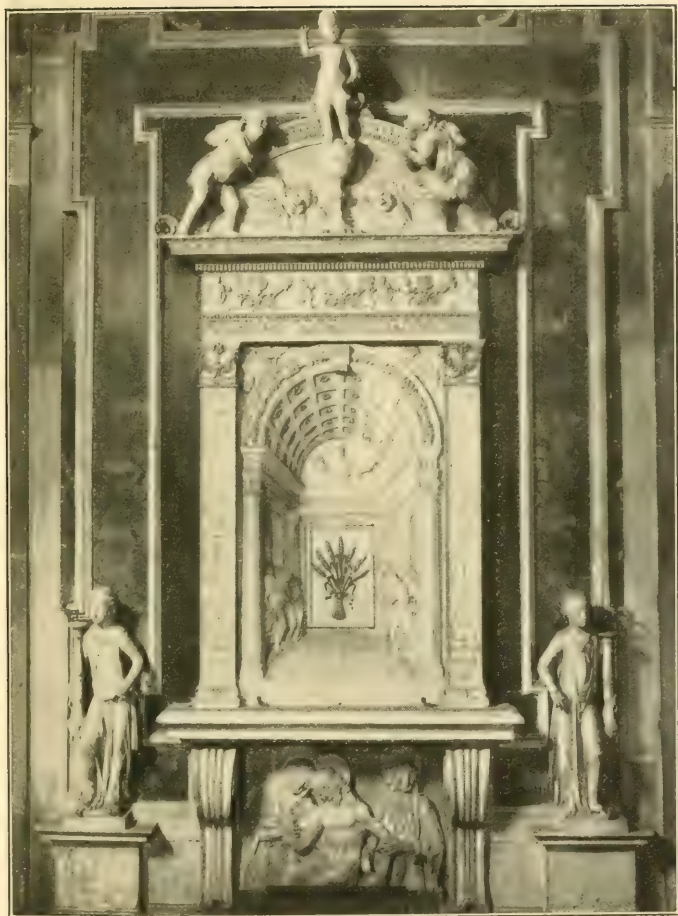


Photo. Alinari

ALTAR IN THE CHAPEL OF THE SACRAMENT

Desiderio da Settignano: San Lorenzo







hour or two spent in this room with the old sacristan as *cicerone* will give one an abiding memory of Florence's first great sculptor.

Out in the bare, cold nave under the tawdry gilt ceiling are two stairless pulpits with rich reliefs in bronze by Donatello and his pupils; while in the left aisle is a beautiful singing gallery, and in the Martelli chapel (second in the left transept) a cradle tomb by the same master. In this chapel, too, is an unlovely crucifix by Cellini and a beautiful Annunciation by Filippo Lippi.

On the altar at the end of the right transept is an exquisite marble shrine by Desiderio da Settignano, almost concealed by the altar fittings; but by scrambling up behind the altar and squeezing in between its back and the shrine one can see something of this delicate and wholly charming piece of decorative sculpture.

In August, 1530, the citizens of Florence gave up their unequal struggle against the intrenched foe without and the compromising plotting commander within the walls. Malatesta became master of Florence and submitted the practical subjection of the city to the Imperial-Papal army. The conditions of the subjection were three, of which one was the return of the Medici to power. There was no further need of Michelangelo's genius at the San Miniato fortifications; but the incoming Medici had need of it for another and very different undertaking. So freedom and security and commissions were offered the artist if he would come forward. Thereupon he left his hiding-place in the bell-tower of San Niccolò by the

Miniato gate, and quietly and immediately began his labors of genius in the New Sacristy of San Lorenzo.

The two statues of the Medici dukes, Lorenzo and Giuliano, and the four extraordinary symbols of time, the famous Morning, Evening, Day, and Night, were actually, so vehemently did the artist work, sufficiently advanced by the end of the year to be placed in niches in the walls of the building sacristy. And in another year, that is by September, 1551, Michelangelo had nearly killed himself with overwork and exposure in the cold, damp underground room. He was an old man of nearly sixty years, working feverishly and utterly regardless of strength and health at his masterpiece. And doing it under tremendous disadvantages, both material and of spirit.

“ If San Marco is the blessed retreat where a happy man detached from the dolorous cares of earth has satisfied himself with giving a visible form to the celestial glory which ravished him, San Lorenzo is the goal where a great suffering soul has constrained marble to express the storm of his rancor and disgust. If Florence had only San Marco and San Lorenzo, this convent and this church, where is preserved that which human art has produced of the most elevated in the two opposite poles of the spirit, would suffice for its glory ” (Hopital).

The sacristy as it now stands with its contained sculptures, is in almost all respects Michelangelo's personal work. His, too, is the beautiful Laurenzian library which overlooks the church cloisters. This



Photo, Brogi

TOMB MONUMENT OF LORENZO DE' MEDICI  
Michelangelo: San Lorenzo



library, founded by Cosimo Medici and protected and enriched by the later members of the family, is an extremely valuable collection of rare codices housed in beautiful rooms. The intricate pattern of the rich red and white inlaid pavement is repeated in the carved ceiling, and the stained-glass windows are unusually lovely. Among the special treasures in the collection, which includes altogether more than 10,000 MSS., are the Pandects of Justinian taken by the Pisans from Amalfi in 1135 and seized by the Florentines when they took Pisa in 1406. Petrarch's Horace and Cicero are here, too, and the Biblia Amiatina "brought from the monastery of Amiata and written by Ceolfridus, a monk of the English Wearmouth (690-716), and taken by him to Rome as an offering at the sepulcher of St. Peter."

But both sacristy and library were being built by Michelangelo for unloved masters. He had long been opposed to the Medici, at least as rulers or claimants for the rule of Florence. Indeed, his anti-Medicean activity would have certainly forfeited his life had he been a man of less fame and worth to the world. It is not surprising to learn, then, that on the death, in September, 1534, of Pope Clement, his powerful protector, and because of his consequent unshielded exposure to the open dislike of Duke Alessandro, Michelangelo should have immediately dropped all his work on the sacristy and library and left Florence for Rome. Nor did he return again until that March, thirty years later, when his dead body was taken secretly out of Rome by his friends and brought to Florence to lie in unofficial state in

Santa Croce until the whole city had passed in sorrow before it.

Thus like so curiously much of Michelangelo's work San Lorenzo's sacristy and its famous figures stand unfinished. But incomplete as they are, they stand, nevertheless, the chief pride of a city overfull of things to warrant pride.



## CHAPTER IX

### THE GALLERIES

#### THE UFFIZI

AS one climbs the toilsome stairway of the Uffizi, he has time to take mental note of his errand. He is about to enter one of the largest and best galleries of paintings in the world—and for what purpose? To see the pictures, certainly. But why see them? Is he an actual draughtsman or colorist eager to learn the technical secrets of the old masters? Is he a student of art history, trying to trace the growth and development of painting, the interacting inspiration of artists, the influence on art of the religious and political beliefs and conditions of a given period?

The answer of most of us is that we are neither artists nor art critics; not students of the history of art; nor even persons of any considerable acquaintanceship with pictures. An honest man, then, entering this gallery, will not behave as if he were what he confesses he is not. He will treat himself and the pictures with simple common sense and truth. He will retain, in some measure, his own individuality and will try to give himself the joy of personal dis-

covery and response; the happiness of the awakening of the germ of art sense and feeling that is sure to be within him.

All of which is not to encourage ourselves to take the stand of the perspiring merchant from Sioux City that we shall soon see standing before Botticelli's little Judith figure that Ruskin has just told him is as true as painter can make it to "the mightiest, purest, brightest type of high passion in severe womanhood offered to our human memory."

"I don't know anything about pictures," responds our friend from the Middle West to Ruskin, "but I know what I like, and I don't like this."

He has said that about music too, when he has had to sit through Parsifal at Bayreuth or a Bach fugue at the Berlin Philharmonie. He added his voice loudly to that overpowering chorus that made "Breaking Home Ties" the "greatest picture at the Chicago Exposition"; and when Sousa's band rose as one man and waved the American flag in the "Trip to Coney Island," he said: "There, that's something like music." But his wife, who never is a Philistine but always a Phil-Ruskin, draws in her breath before a one-star picture and lets it out again in an ecstatic sigh before a two-star one. She revels in ready-made admirations and recommended aversions.

Where, indeed, shall we stand between not knowing about pictures but knowing what we like, and not knowing anything at all but taking somebody's shilling short-cut to knowing everything?

The presumption is not mine to say. Indeed, one

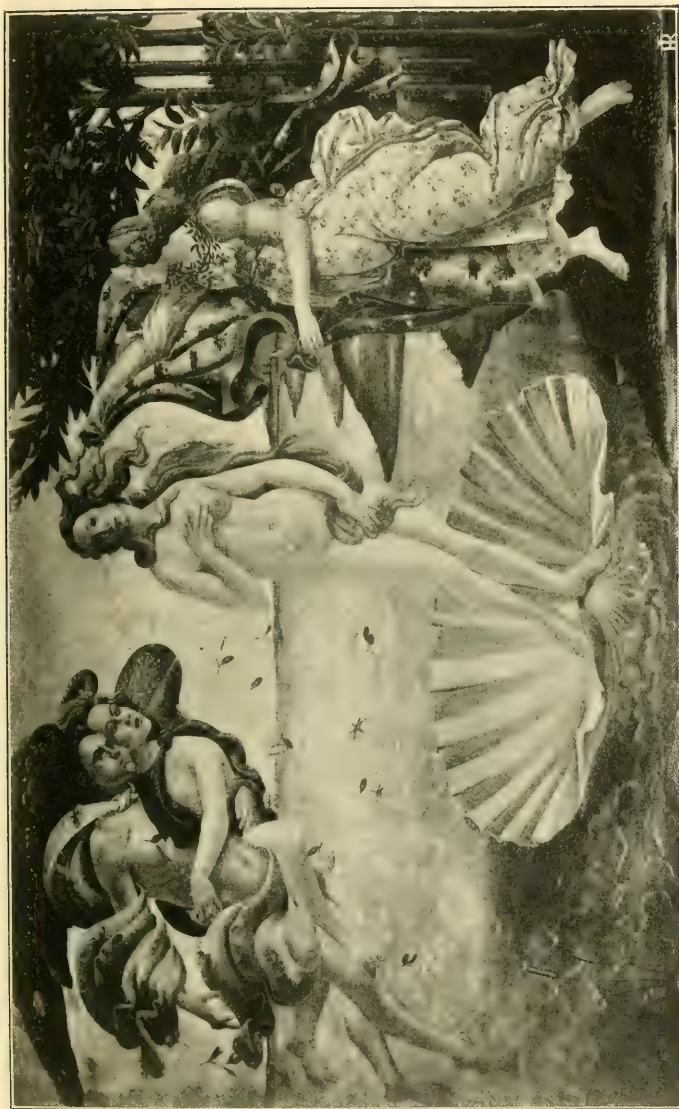


Photo. Brogi

THE BIRTH OF VENUS  
Botticelli: Uffizi



must find oneself; and my own troubles are sufficient to me for my days. But honesty and independence coupled with due respect to authority that justifies itself, recognition of what is unattainable but a strong hope and desire to attain what is possible, some little information about the times and life of the artist, some little also about the subject of the picture; these, with our own glad eyes, an open mind, and a hungering soul must be an equipment able somehow to find us a better standpoint than the prideful honesty of blatant ignorance, or the silly hypocrisy that conceals an equal ignorance neither from others nor ourselves.

"All the guide-books I ever read ask the traveler to see too much," says Hutton in some book of his. This is going to be the exception; in fact, it will not tell of seeing enough, and hence it will not be sufficient to most as a guide-book. But where, as in the Florence galleries, the pictures are all fully labeled—except for the signs of some one's approval or disapproval—a catalogue is hardly necessary. And especially is a catalogue for the Uffizi a rather difficult thing to compile satisfactorily because of the constant movement of the pictures, due to Ricci's persistent efforts to put some informing order into what has long been approximate chaos.

At the top of the long stair one comes first to four rooms which will be for many of much more interest than the guide-books reveal in their curt lines. These are the rooms in which are hung the portraits of the "masters painted by themselves." The faces of men who have achieved have a strong fascination. And

when into these faces have been put what the brains and souls behind them conceive they should show, this fascination becomes doubly gripping. So one lingers in these rooms making acquaintance with the men whose names one knows, something of whose lives one ought to know, and whose works one is just about to see. One stands struck by the suggestive juxtaposition of the rugged Michelangelo (not a self-portrait), his face and hands seamed like the bark of an old oak, with the elegant Leonardo da Vinci; the glorified street gamin face of Filippino Lippi and Raphael's lifted eyes of genius. Here are Titian and del Sarto, the Englishmen Watts and Millais, the Low Countries Rubens and Van Dyck and Matsys, the German Dürer and Holbein. And here are Madame Le Brun and Angelica Kauffmann representing the mistresses among the masters.

We go on from the masters to the masterpieces. And in the very first room we discover how necessary as preparation for satisfactory seeing is one part of that equipment which I have just tried to catalogue. The paintings in these Florentine galleries—and, for that matter, in all the galleries in the world that, like them, are devoted to the "old masters"—are the work of artists dead long before our time; artists of the Renaissance and of the centuries immediately following.

Looking at these pictures is a very different experience from viewing a spring salon in Paris or going through the rooms of the Luxembourg or other modern gallery. The pictures here are not landscapes—primarily, at any rate—nor plates of fruit by bronze



jars, nor "ladies in gray," nor Monet impressions of gardens in blossoms and women in *toilette du bal*, or less. They are for the greater part, one after another, pictures of faces and stories of the Christ family and of the apostles, saints, and martyrs. A monotonous repetition, if you like, of conceptions of the Madonna and Child, the Saviour on the Cross, the Saviour arising, the Saviour enthroned in judgment; and an endless retelling of stories from the lives of the apostles and saints, stories chiefly of naïve belief in miracle and wonder, of martyrdom and glorification.

We need to know the stories, therefore, if we are to understand the pictures and the attitude and attempt of the artist. We need to know the attitude of the people toward art in the times of the artists; and of the absolute dominance of the Church in all things connected with art and with the opportunities of the artists for work. Otherwise we shall walk half blindly through the galleries. We should have read some such books as Mrs. Jameson's lives of the saints and some accounts of the artists themselves, such as Vasari's gossiping tales or Grimm's thoroughgoing life of Michelangelo or Kugler's or Crowe and Cavalcaselle's massive compilations.

And even then, finally, these pictures may not make an appeal. Most of the art of Florence will not speak to persons who like landscapes or pictures of sensation. But they will to those who like Man better than Nature; who are interested in human psychology and sentiment, and especially to them who *believe*, as the old painters believed.

These may wander at will through the corridors and rooms of treasure. They may go when tired and come again and again for new discoveries, new delights. And each time they return they will find themselves a little more understanding, a little more critically examining, a little more appreciating the master thought and touch. It may be in the vaunted Tribune that the thrill will be quickest to come, the joy keenest to feel. Or it may be in some room of fewer stars. Perhaps the rich gleam of the Venetians, or the religious fervor of the painting priests of Tuscany may appeal most. Or it may be the magic lines, the sinuous figures and flowing draperies, the cloying sweet faces of holy women and angel children in Sandro Botticelli's gold-framed tondi.

From room to room one wanders with open eyes and unbiased mind. The famous name should not be too compelling. One is too likely to look carefully at an indifferent effort by some well-known artist and throw only a vague glance at a marvelous bit by an artist of name unfamiliar to the casual sightseer. It is a common mistake. Only the student needs to see all the works of a master.

Another trouble is the loss of effect because of the unfortunate close crowding of the pictures. In the Uffizi any one of a hundred paintings would be the pride and sufficient justification of a provincial museum or a private gallery; indeed, of almost any gallery in America outside of the Metropolitan. This Raphael or that Perugino or Titian or Giorgione alone would be visited by thousands; one would travel far to see it. Here it is one of a hundred equally



Photo. Brogi

VIRGIN AND CHILD  
Filippo Lippi: Uffizi



wonderful. The Uffizi, then, as a whole is inconceivably valuable, but each picture in it is greatly lessened in its appeal by being put with all the others.

With all this preamble of gratuitous advice and lecturing about picture-seeing, there is little space to speak of the Uffizi's pictures themselves. But, indeed, that is just what I have never had any intention of doing. Or at least, not beyond the fleeting expression of a certain personal satisfaction experienced in seeing certain particular things—and what picture-seeker is there who can resist that?

"How I remember," I say with keenest joy, "that little jewel of Carpaccio's; that *Sogetto Biblico* that analyzes itself as you look at it from a kaleidoscopic play of color and pattern into human faces and animation.

"And in that room," I continue, "—the room of the Venetians; the one with Titian's *Flora* before which the guides immediately lead all their docile charges—in that room just adjoining the *Sogetto Biblico* is that glorious little triptych by Mantegna, with the *Ascension* in the left wing, the *Adoration of the Magi* in the middle, and the *Circumcision* in the right; a picture that simply glows with color and breathes with life."

"Oh, yes; and in the same room," takes up my companion, "are Giorgione's wonderful three; that black-bearded Knight of Malta, flanked by the *Judgment of Solomon* and the *Child Moses*, in each of which the human groups are singing chords of color, sounding out of the softer harmony of the landscape background. And there, too, is Giovanni

Bellini's naïve and childishly reverent *Sacra Conversazione*, with its elaborate landscape and its complications of tone."

"Yes, and above all," I interrupt, "that immensely human St. Anthony and the Virgin of Titian with the playing St. John and Christ-Child. Baby John holds high a slender cross in his left hand, while with his right he hands up flowers to the little Christ, who sprawls in the Madonna's lap."

In the room next the Venetians is a strange, hard, crude, but very strong Crucifixion by Andrea del Castagno, the peasant painter. It is a fresco done on a black background and the figures have all the uncouthness and all the strikingness of the painter's similar types in his *Cenacolo* in the convent of Santa Apollonia. In the same room also is a large ruined fresco by Fra Bartolommeo of the Judgment.

Adjoining these is the room of tabernacles; a room of triptychs and angels. There is a large work here by Lorenzo Monaco, a *Crowning of the Virgin*, with bright colors put on in masses, and another large triptych of Fra Angelico which was done for the Guild of Woolweavers. But the sounding joy of this room is Angelico's golden *Crowning of the Virgin*, with its lifted trumpets and beatified faces.

The Sala di Botticelli includes among its fifteen pictures of this artist the famous *Birth of Venus*; the *Adoration of the Magi*, with the artist himself as the extreme right-hand figure; the vigorous allegory of *Calumny* with its architectural landscape; and the two little pictures, so praised by Ruskin, of the *Judith* and *Holofernes* story. The *Venus* picture is



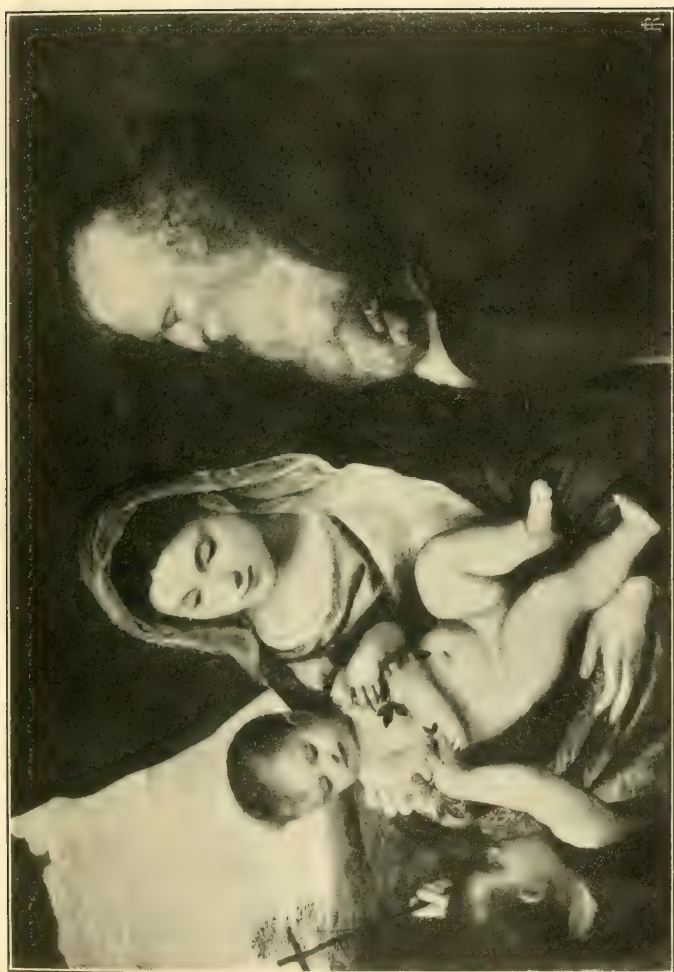


Photo. Brogi

VIRGIN, CHILD, ST. JOHN, AND ST. ANTHONY

Titian: Uffizi



the apotheosis of the curved line. Only the tree trunks are rectilinear.

In the Sala di Leonardo on opposite walls are Leonardo da Vinci's cartoon of the Adoration of the Magi and a battle scene by Paolo Uccello, with a kicking horse so ludicrous in its wrongness that a schoolboy would deride it in the drawing of another. Of how far a genius for color may be substituted for a talent for drawing Uccello's various pictures are a fair test. In this room also is an exquisite Annunciation by Leonardo da Vinci. The blue-robed Virgin is sitting behind a reading desk and low carved table. In front of the table, kneeling in the flower-strewn grass, is the Angel, with flowing red draperies and right arm half outstretched. In the background are symmetrical trees and a distant cliffy mountain. It is a picture that balances and sings like a lyric poem. Here also is Fra Filippo Lippi's much-visited Madonna of the filmy headdress, with the Babe being held up to her by two angel children.

In the little Sala di Michelangelo is the artist's Holy Family, with its curious introduction of a number of irrelevant nude figures, making a picture over into the painter's equivalent of an *étude* for the piano. The figures of the Holy Family itself are far from sanctified in seeming. The picture is, however, of great interest to any student of Michelangelo, for it is one of his very few easel paintings.

In a new small room off one of the halls of the Tuscan school are two charming pictures of Melozzo da Forlì, the sundered Angel and Virgin of an Annunciation. The Virgin has dark-green outer drap-

ery with dark red-purple underneath and a black mantilla over her head. The Angel is serious but animated, advancing swiftly with skirt and girdle flying and hand uplifted.

The Tribuna, focus of all the Uffizi's wonders, contains five masterpieces of sculpture and two score "pictures selected as *capi d'opera* and arranged without reference to schools or dates." It is a startling example of the incalculable harm that can be done by this mode of lack of arrangement and crowding. It is the method of sensation; and it misses even this aim, which would be no virtue if attained. Raphael's Madonna of the Cardellino, St. John in the Wilderness, and replica Portrait of Pope Julius II hang here. Titian's two Venuses, one with the Cupid, the other with the little dog, and his portrait of Beccadelli; two of Correggio's best works; an Adoration of the Magi by Dürer; two portraits by Van Dyck; pictures by Rubens, Veronese, Francia, Luini, Kranach, Guercino, Luca van Leyden, Fra Bartolommeo, Spagnoletto, Perugino, and still others with names familiar are here. It is a collection of most enjoyable riches with any one thing in it very hard to enjoy.

The sculpture of the Uffizi, considerable in quantity, seems to be, with the exception of a few pieces, rather undistinguished. The famous five antiques of the Tribuna and the Niobe group in the Sala di Niobe are the better known prizes. The Niobe room is one of the most satisfactory in the whole gallery. It is restful and impressive in its singleness of use. The statues, originally a single group found near

Rome, are now placed separately about the room. The figure of Niobe herself, clasping her youngest child, presents an extraordinary expression of intensity and nobility of grief.

The Tribuna five are the Venus of Medici, the kneeling Scythian slave whetting his knife to flay Marsyas, the group of Wrestlers, young Apollo, and the Dorian Satyr. Of these it is to the Venus of Medici that one turns with most interest. But beautiful Roman as she is, she falls far short of her Grecian sister of the Louvre. In this comparison she is, to be sure, badly handicapped by her difference in setting. The Venus of Melos has her own boudoir. She is seen from far down the corridor of open rooms projected in perfect outline against the relieving background. It is the same advantage that the Germans have given the Sistine Madonna, in her own quiet room, over Raphael's other Madonnas, the Gran Duca, della Sedia, and the Cardellino, here in the Florentine galleries.

Strolling the length of the corridors one may pause a moment in front of Bandinelli's self-vaunted copy of the Laocoön, to muse on the harm a little man can do a great one, with opportunity. Bandinelli harried and heckled Michelangelo for a score of years, and by sheer self-conceit and persistence managed to push himself into a position of apparent rivalry with him. His chief triumph came when he got his Hercules and Cacus put on the platform of the Palazzo Vecchio, opposite Michelangelo's David (now removed to the Accademia). Over Bandinelli's tomb in Santa Annunziata is a Pietà by

his own hand, which, in his extraordinary conceit, the sculptor thought to rival Michelangelo's masterpiece in Rome. Of Bandinelli's effort Michelangelo is said to have remarked:

"I have only pity for that 'Pietà'!"

The three rooms of sketches by the masters seem little lingered in, but there is much of interest in them. Especially in the last one of the three (called "Sala Prima") is one held fascinated by this intimate meeting with the masters in their undress uniform. Sketches, finished drawings, architectural design, bits of human anatomy, tentative groupings, and compositions in the swift free lines and scratches of pen or pencil of a half-hundred men whose pictures fill the Florentine galleries. Raphael's sketches for the Gran Duca and Cardellino Madonnas, Titian, Giorgione with his fancy for musicians showing in his sketches of players of various instruments, Carpaccio, Pinturricchio, Perugino, Vasari, Cellini (designs for silver or gold work), Baccio Bandinelli's drawings for his Hercules and Cacus, are all in the first two rooms (Sale II and III).

In the Sala Prima are the Tuscan and Florentine painters. Here are sketches and designs by Donatello, Masolino, Fra Bartolommeo, Andrea del Sarto, of these latter two an especially large showing; Fra Angelico, Ghiberti, Andrea del Castagno, Filippo Lippi, and Filippino his son, Domenico Ghirlandajo, Botticelli, Verrochio, Luca Signorelli, Piero di Cosimo, Antonio and Piero del Pollaiuolo, Benozzo Gozzoli, Mario Albertinelli, Lorenzo di Credi, Paolo



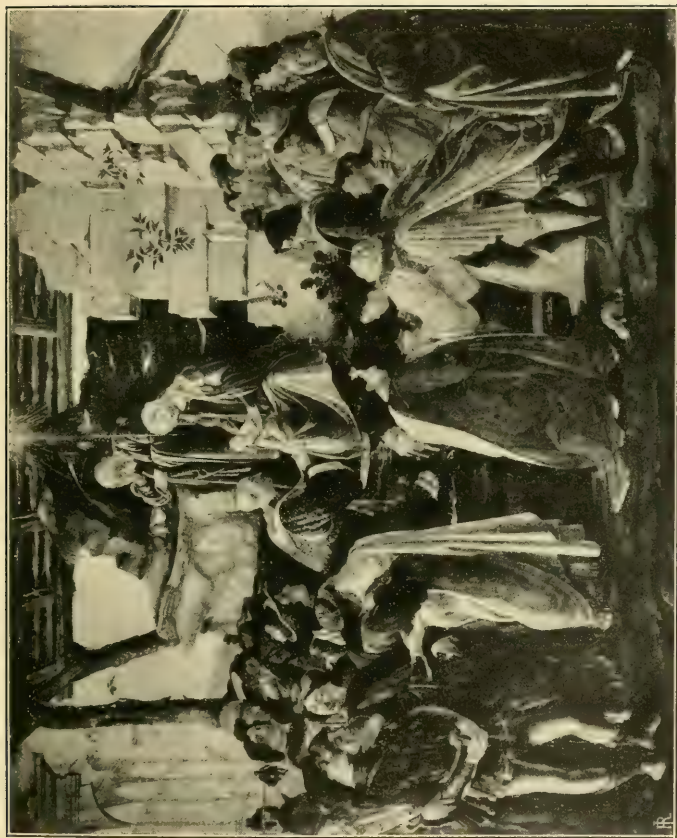


Photo. Brogi

ADORATION OF THE MAGI  
Botticelli: Uffizi



Uccello, and Michelangelo. Of this last, most interesting is the first drawing (No. 608) for the never completed mausoleum of Pope Julius II, begun in the Pope's lifetime and worked at intermittently and to the great worry of mind of the artist and the constant interference with his other projects, for over twenty years. For this mausoleum the celebrated Moses and the Bound Captives were made.

To reach the rooms of drawings and designs one has had to pass along hundreds of feet of corridors. Lined by old paintings, sculptures, and drawings, this league of corridor contains an important part of the Uffizi collections. But it has an added interest and charm in its timbered and decorated ceiling, which is covered with an amazing variety of arabesques painted in the sixteenth century. Although rather tiring it is fascinating work to pick out the details and scheme of decoration in this exhaustless ceiling gallery.

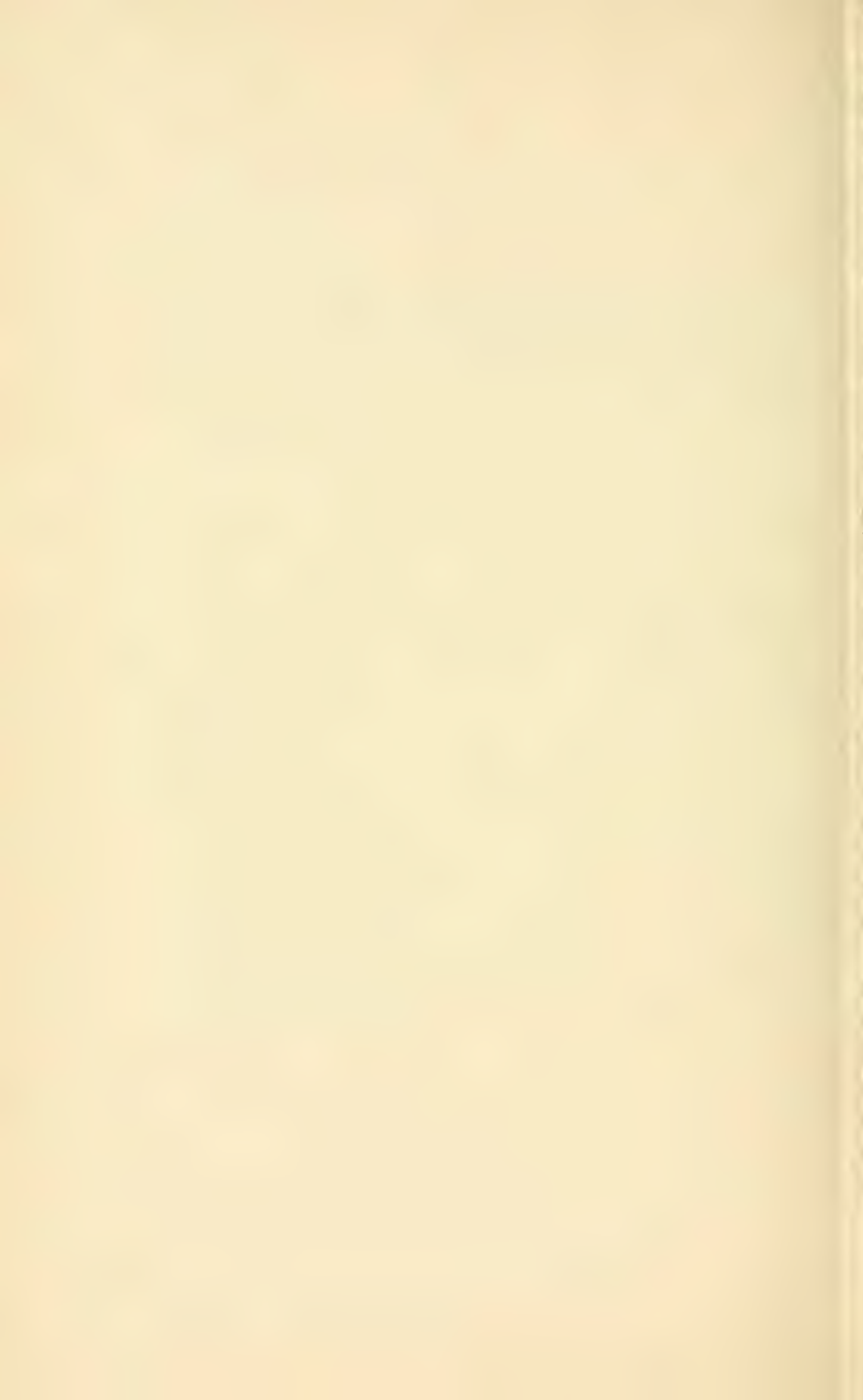
Finally, there is a curious part of the Uffizi—if it should be reckoned with this gallery rather than with the Pitti—which to some people proves of unusual fascination. It is Vasari's long angled passage which leads from the west corridor across the Ponte Vecchio and thence to the Pitti Palace. This long overhead tunnel was built by the Medici to connect the Palazzo Vecchio with the Palazzo Pitti as a means of safety in case of a popular uprising. Now it is a convenient short-cut from one picture gallery to another, offering at the same time a wealth of curious interest on its walls. Here are hung the portraits of half a thousand worthy and unworthy citizens of Medicean

Florence, chief among whom are the many Medici themselves. It is at once the Rogues' Gallery and the Hall of Fame of Renaissance Florence. From these faces look out the history and humanity of a wonderful epoch of the world's life.



Photo. Brogi

THE CONCERT  
Giorgione: Pitti





## CHAPTER X

### THE GALLERIES (CONTINUED)

#### THE PITTI AND ACCADEMIA

AT the end of the long passage from the Uffizi, which runs over a famous bridge across a famous river, is the Pitti: a gallery of perfect satisfaction or as nearly that, probably, as one can come to among all the collections of Europe. By no means the largest; indeed, that is one of the joys of it. The Louvre, Dresden, Berlin, Vienna, Madrid, the Uffizi just across the river, these and others are the large galleries. The Accademia in Venice, the Brera in Milan, the Hague, and the other small ones, but far and away first among them the Pitti, are the galleries one comes really to know and to love.

Although the passage from the Uffizi leads directly to the Pitti, this is not the way to come to it, if the traverse of the passage means that the larger gallery has first been visited. One should enter it fresh and unfatigued. The very introduction, Giorgione's marvelous Concert, which faces one from across the room as he steps over the threshold of the first hall, the Saloon of the Iliad, is fair sign

and measure of the unique richness, the glory of color, and wealth of genius in this gallery. From this room on through the saloons of Saturn, Jupiter, Mars, Apollo, Venus, and the rest one wanders wide-eyed and breathless, reluctant to leave one hall, eager to enter the next.

To each his own choice. For myself, in the first room, the Sala d'Iliade, I linger longest and with most delight before the Concert, which is music veritably humanized. The dispute over the attribution of this picture need not detract from its interest: it cannot from its charm. Near it in this room is Sustermann's fascinating boy Prince of Denmark; and on opposite walls are two large pictures of The Assumption by Andrea del Sarto. These latter have an interest apart from their beauty in the opportunity they give to note the artist's resources in connection with a single subject.

The Hall of Saturn is the Hall of Raphael. There are eight of his pictures here, four of such character and so hung as to make a curiously balanced quartette. These are the two men in red, Inghirami and Bibbiena, and the two Madonnas of world fame, the Gran Duca and della Sedia. Here is Raphael at his smoothest and sweetest. He is here the courtier and the artist genius turn by turn, and both at once. It is interesting to look from Raphael to Perugino his master, as shown in a single famous picture in this room, the Deposition from St. Chiara. Sweet and smooth are truly the words for both master and master-surpassing pupil.

In the adjoining room, the Hall of Jupiter, is



Photo. Brogi

THE GRANDUCA MADONNA  
Raphael: Pitti



Raphael's *La Velata*, with its face of the Sistine Madonna secularized. Opposite it is Titian's violet-sleeved *Fornarina*; beauty against beauty. Here also is a picture by an unknown artist—or rather, an undetermined artist, but one forever famous by this picture alone—the so-called *Three Ages of Man*. The face of the old man is a face of affairs; that of the middle-aged man a Christ-face; and that of the boy a painter or poet in his beginning. Another picture here of three faces, or really a triple repetition of a single face, is *The Fates*, painted by Rosso Fiorentino after an alleged design of Michelangelo's. In the Hall of Prometheus just off this room is Filippo Lippi's delightful tondo of the Madonna and Child, with the Nativity of Mary in the background.

In the Sala di Marte are two unforgettable portraits by Rembrandt. One is the world-familiar one of himself as a young man, with low forehead and almost gamin face. The other is that of a fine old man, experienced, wise, quiet, but with a strong life still burning behind the face. Here, too, is Titian's *Ritratto Virile*, called, for want of any other name, the *Young Englishman*. Perhaps no other picture in the Pitti gives one so much food for fancy as does this inscrutable face. Here also is another of those great wall-covering canvases of Andrea del Sarto, of which the Pitti is full. This is a *Holy Family* painted for one of the Medici.

As one enters the next room, the Hall of Apollo, a striking picture of red and black across the room catches the eye and holds it. It is Raphael's uncom-

promising portrait of the first Medici Pope, Leo X, with his two nephew cardinals looking over his shoulders. It is a picture that tells how much a Pope was a prince of state in those days, and how little a vicar of church; a man of force and self-will and pleasure, but no saint for you and me. In this room also is Titian's luxuriant Mary Magdalen, and, skied above it, Sustermann's charming baby Cosimo III. Raphael's little Vision of Ezekiel is also here, and a Madonna and Child by Murillo that satisfies more than some others of this variously criticised Spaniard.

In the adjoining Hall of Venus is Raphael's Pope Julius II, a genius's conception of this patron of the arts, warrior of the field, and undaunted fighter of countless enemies and obstacles. A splendid old man whose very worldliness and ambition made him a better Pope for his day.

There are other rooms, although in these first half-dozen most of the glory of the Pitti is gathered. But everywhere there is color and delight. The very walls and ceilings, rich and splendid in their decoration, the beautiful great golden frames set on hinges to make them follow the light, the scattered superb vases and cabinets and tables all add to the Pitti's distinction. And distinction may well be the fitting closing word for this gallery.

If we come to the Accademia last it is, perhaps, only because of the retrospect it can give of the whole history of Florentine, and, partly, Umbrian, painting. The Accademia delle Belli Arti is more truly a museum, a teaching collection, than either





Photo. Brogi

POPE LEO X AND CARDINALS GIULIO DE' MEDICI  
AND LUIGI DE' ROSSI  
Raphael: Pitti



the Pitti or the Uffizi; although this latter, by its steady rearranging, is coming more and more to be informing to the tourist who must read as he runs. Perhaps, indeed, it would be better if one, for the sake of this opportunity for orientation in Tuscan art, this opportunity to follow the course of the birth, development, and decadence of Tuscan painting, would come to the Accademia first. However, this is a matter of personal liking.

On entering, one strolls lingeringly by the attractive naïveté of the fine Flemish tapestries that clothe the walls of the broad vestibule. How delightful the animals in Eden passing in review before Adam; the unicorn proudly leading the large quadrupeds, the over-fat and toothsome mice right in front of the very jaws of the paradisaic cats, and the fowls of the air in a great flying stream led by ostriches and other like birds believed by the foolish naturalists to be incapable of flight! One leaves them with reluctance. But once left all one's attention is immediately given to that David of wonder and of extraordinary history, of limitless description and praise. Whatever the little contentions about details, the size of head, hands, and feet, for example, the whole the world has long given Michelangelo nothing but praise for this his first great attempt.

The story of the undertaking is of interest. First the puzzle of the single great block of Carrara marble and the reluctance of all the sculptors to undertake its subject. Then Michelangelo's decision and permission to make the attempt, and his two years and more of nearly continuous labor before the completion of

the statue. Finally, the famous council of artists and architects called to determine where it should be placed; the long debates, the decision to put it next the gate of the palace of the Signoria (the Palazzo Vecchio) to replace the smaller David of Donatello (now in the Bargello). But deciding to put the statue in place by no means put it there. So Il Cronaca, the Garrulous, devised a great scaffolding for lifting and transporting the 18,000-pound monster. For three exciting days it moved slowly through the streets with its guards, attacked each night by evil wishers. But at dawn of May 18, 1504, it arrived safely and was put in place.

"The erection of the 'David,' " says Grimm in his "Life of Michelangelo," "was like an occurrence of Nature from which people are wont to reckon. We find events dated so many years after the erection of the giant. It was mentioned in records in which there was not a line besides respecting art."

For three and a half centuries David stood at the portal of the palace of the people. A curiously long deferred anxiety about the danger to the statue from the elements led, in 1873, to its removal to its present roofed-in quarters. Up on Monte San Miniato, near the scenes of Michelangelo's herculean labors of fortification in that sad time of Florence's struggle with a besieging Emperor and Pope, stands a bronze copy of the statue. And from most of the city the bared youthful head can be seen outlined against the sky when one looks across the river toward San Miniato.

Around David in the Accademia are grouped



Photo. Brogi

THE ADORATION  
D. Ghirlandajo: Accademia





several casts of Michelangelo's other works, together with some of his drawings and an admirable series of photographs of his Sistine frescoes.

To attend to the pictures of the Accademia and their teaching one may advisably first enter the room at that end of the corridor which contains the cast of Michelangelo's Roman Pietà (a cast presented by the city of Rome to the city of Florence). Here begins a series which, starting with Cimabue in the thirteenth century—there are even two or three truly Byzantine pieces as forerunners of Cimabue—goes on through the glory of the fourteenth and fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, into the fading of the later sixteenth and the decadence of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The latter pictures are gathered fittingly into a dark room (VIII) and make of it almost a chamber of horrors. Not the least of these horrors is Carlo Dolci's sickening Christ head. On an easel in this room, but put here for the light and not at all as belonging in time or quality to the rest of the collection, is a Madonna by Masaccio, reserved, strong, and quietly dignified.

The easel pictures in the first room of the series are an Adoration of the Magi by Gentile da Fabbriano and an Adoration of the Shepherds by Domenico Ghirlandajo. They are both intense in color and life, crowded with figures and elaborate in background. They attract much attention, as they deserve, but they really keep the sightseer unfairly long away from the valuable, and from the historical point of view more important, Madonna of Cimabue and the Giotto pictures on the left wall.

The Giotto paintings are a series of panels illustrating his favorite subject, the life of St. Francis.

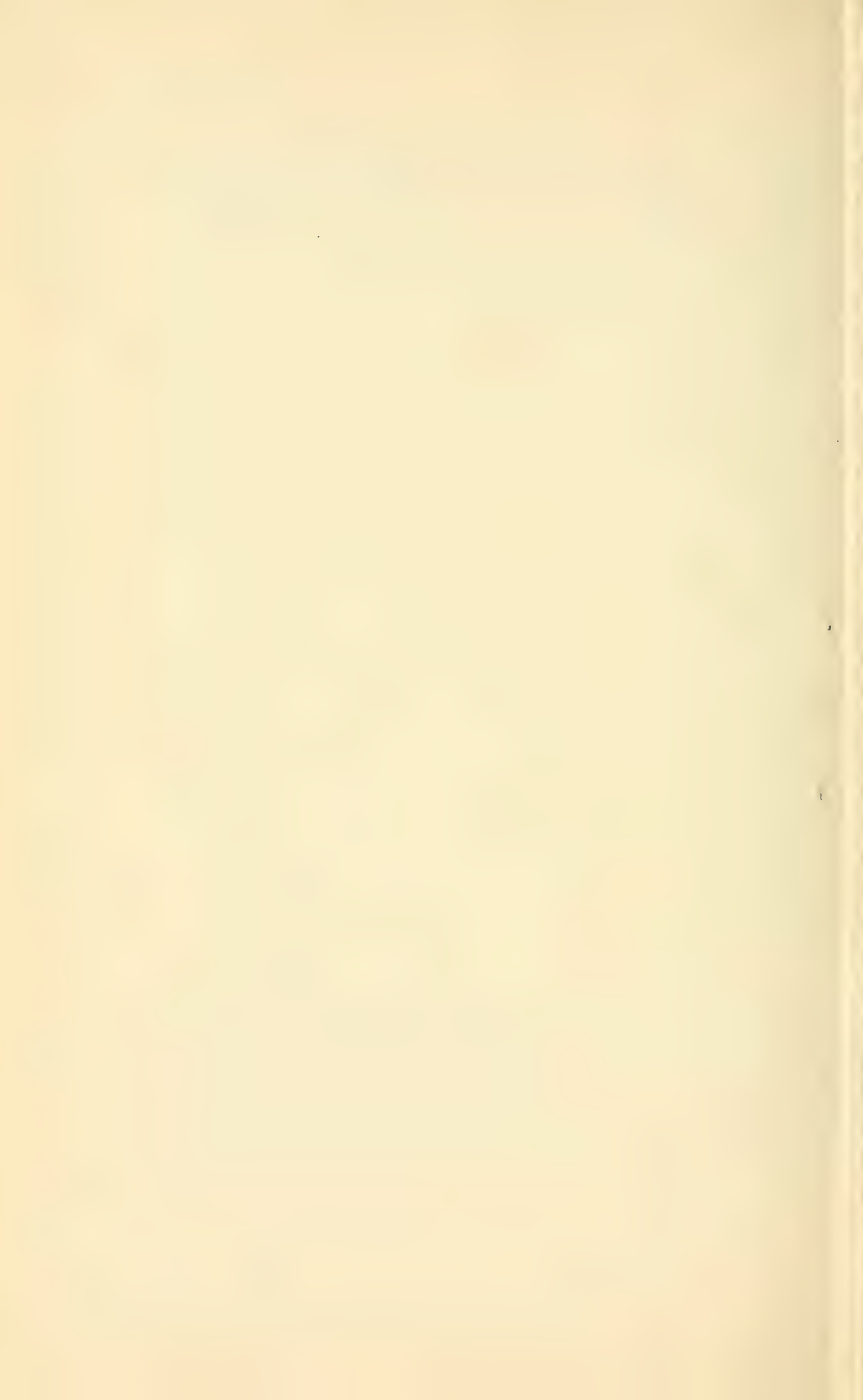
The next room (VII) contains Fra Bartolommeo's fresco portrait sketches taken from the walls of San Marco and elsewhere and set up here as framed pictures. Most interesting of these is certainly that one of Savonarola in the guise of St. Peter Martyr. Two pictures of Albertinelli, an artist of name less familiar than deserved, are here, an Annunciation and a Madonna and Child. In this room also is (usually) on an easel the wonderful Deposition from the Cross, of that other painting priest of San Marco, Fra Angelico, or Fra Giovanni da Fiesole, as the Fiesoleans still call him. How his blue Italian sky of summer glorifies the whole picture.

Returning to the room nearer the David, namely, the Sala di Perugino and the two Sale di Botticelli, we find a concentration of masterpieces of the Tuscan and Umbrian masters. Here is Fra Filippo Lippi's very beautiful Coronation of the Virgin, with the artist himself in the picture. He is on the right, with hands clasped and looking intently at his nun of human feelings. Here also are two cherubim of Andrea del Sarto, "spirits of just babies made perfect" to quote an apt friend. And the wonderful portraits by Perugino of two Vallombrosan monks. There is an Assumption by this master of Raphael painted for the monastery at Vallombrosa and containing a figure of San Giovanni Gualberto, the picturesque founder of the forest monastery. And Luca Signorelli's strong and realistic but most reverent Crucifixion. Also Lorenzo



Photo. Progi

SPRING  
Botticelli: Accademia



di Credi's Adoration of the Shepherds and Holy Family and Angels. And, finally, here is the group of paintings by the master whose work has made the Accademia famous and whose name, Sandro Botticelli, is that most often mentioned among the painters whose patrons were the Medici.

The moonlight sonata of this artist, the Reign of Venus, or more familiarly the Primavera, is the most beset picture in the gallery. It seems to be fading a little, but perhaps it is only the waning of the moon over this fantastically beautiful group of dream figures. Are these forms wholly human? Especially that wild leaping thing of the woods with the leafy spray in her mouth? Have not Böcklin's half-human, half-animal creatures of the Urwald a prototype in this Chloris of the dream painter of the Renaissance?

The Primavera is flanked by two of Filippo Lippi's most delicate and exquisitely beautiful pictures, a Nativity and an Adoration.

Another picture of Botticelli's that attracts unusual attention is the Angels with Tobias. The youthful Tobias carries his fish in one hand while with the other he clasps lightly the hand of one of the angels. They are all moving vigorously along over a rough ground with draperies flying and one foot of each a-tiptoe.

In the Sala del Angelico is a collection of bits by Fra Angelico taken from San Domenico di Fiesole. These little pictures lose much by being plucked out of their churchly and monastic setting and crowded together in a single small room, but the delicacy of



drawing and color and the earnest religious feeling of the painter triumph over all this misfortune. The group of sightseers concentrates ever about the Last Judgment. This picture is larger than most of the others and next to the David and the Primavera is the best known object of pilgrimage in the Accademia. The hand-in-hand circle of happy elect in the lower left-hand corner of the picture leaves a memory of pure bliss. The other side of the picture, with its rather ludicrous damned, is so much less successful that one inevitably asks the reason for such a disparity of conception and work revealed in a single picture. Is it that Fra Angelico was always so lost in ecstatic visions of heaven, and so penetrated by the belief in an all-pitying and all-loving Saviour, that he was simply unable to conceive of hell?

The two succeeding rooms of pictures by early Florentine painters of questionable distinction have not much in them to arrest us.

If one is curious to see just how far the decadence in Italian art, beginning in the seventeenth century, has reached in the twentieth, he should spend a few moments upstairs in the rooms of modern paintings. Here mentions Morgan's Death of Raphael and Ussi's Banishment of the Duke of Athens as the two most notable pictures in this collection. But some will care more for Eugenio Cecconi's vigorous hunt of the wild boar, with its full breath of out-of-doors and its tensely halted animals.

In the first room of the series leading to the right there is an interesting group of five small paintings



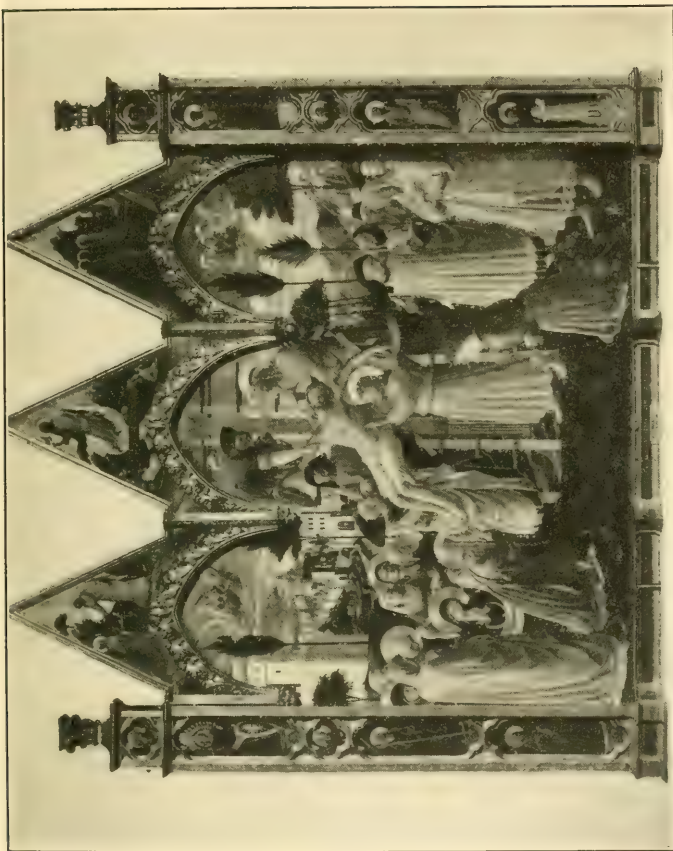


Photo. Brogi

THE DEPOSITION  
Fra Angelico: Accademia



by Giovanni Signorini of carnival, race, festa, and fireworks in Florence on the piazzas of Santa Maria Novella and Santa Croce and on the bridge of Santa Trinità. In the last room of this series there is a picture painted by Enrico Farfani from the Loggia dei Lanzi, showing part of the piazza in the revolution of 1859. In the glimpse of the front of the Palazzo Vecchio in this picture one sees the David in its original place.

Finally, in any even most incomplete account of the pictures in Florence, reference must not be omitted to two remarkable works of Botticelli, the Pallas and the Madonna with the Roses stranded in one of the royal bed-chambers or ante-rooms in the Pitti Palace. Why these pictures cannot be got out from their hiding-place and put into the Pitti gallery, or one of the others, is hard to understand. As it is, one has to traverse and be shown an interminable series of royal bedrooms and the like in green and blue and red and yellow, all suggestive and proper enough of royalty but wholly unnecessary to the seeing of the pictures. There are, indeed, pleasant rumors afloat that Ricci would like not only to rescue these marooned masterpieces of Botticelli but also to remove and rearrange in their proper places in the great Uffizi pageant the pictures now hanging in the dark and dangerously damp and mouldy rooms of the Accademia. That would truly be a breath-taking room in the Uffizi in which the Birth of Venus and the Reign of Venus should be hanging on opposite walls as they were originally painted to be.

## CHAPTER XI

### CASTLES AND PALACES

#### PALAZZO VECCHIO AND IL BARGELLO

FROM the days when we first read Walter Scott and looked at the geography book pictures of the castle-lined Rhine, most of us have had a clear mental image of a proper castle. And from the days when we first knew from story and illustration the jeweled front of the Doge's Palace by its magic waters, and the limitless length of Versailles in its garden of fountains, we have been pretty confident of the seeming of a palace.

Well, the castles and palaces of Florence are different. The castles are on no lonely hilltop. They front on crowded streets and are jostled by shops and restaurants. And the façades of the palaces are simple great wall surfaces, unadorned except by huge iron torch-sockets or corner lanterns and worn family *stemmi* carved in the rough stone. These palaces seem to be just great cubes of stone set four-square to the streets and humble houses of the city. Seventy-six of them are catalogued in a recent book devoted to their description and history—there are really many more than this book lists—and they all seem as much alike as so many peas. But they are

no more alike; for peas, after all, always truly differ from each other, although keeping closely to the recognized pea plan of architecture.

If one climbs the four hundred stairsteps of the Palazzo Vecchio tower, and looks down on the Florentine palaces he will discover a hole in the top of each of these solid seeming cubes, a hole which goes clear down to the ground and is really a small court which usually has a lot of green things at its bottom. And if one descends and rings up the *custode* of one of the cubes when its inhabitants are at Viareggio or in the Pistojesse mountains for the hot season, he can readily get acquainted with the general, simple, practical plan of the Florentine palace.

There are exceptions, of course, to the general type; most conspicuously the Pitti palace, the greatest of them all and one of the noblest, most splendid, and truly regal palaces in Europe. It is long and winged. But most of the others keep to the compact cube, a plan due less to the fancy of the Florentine merchant-prince nobility than to the urgency of those lively days of Palleski, Arrabbiati, and Piagnone mutual house-to-house visitations under arms.

As to the castles of Florence, there are only two that I am going to write of, and as neither of them is really called castle, it is obviously foolish to make castle generalizations in their connection. However, each has donjons and battlements and a huge tower, and so is really something like our early picturing.

The first and much the larger of these two is the Palazzo Vecchio, towering hugely and really most grimly castle-like up from the busy Piazza della

Signoria. "Rude are its walls, severe its crenelations where hung the Pazzi and toward which mounted the smoke of the funeral pyre of Savonarola." Castle and piazza form together the focus of most Florentine history and fiction. They are still the center to which the converging threads of present-day



"Michelozzo's beautiful little court with its winsome laughing boy of Verrocchio spurting water over his dolphin playmate."

Florentine life run. In and near the piazza men strike hands over the market-day transactions. Here the straggling lines of tourist caravans under their marshaling leaders are beset and harried by a cloud of flanking parasites. And here come the shining carriages of the Florentine wedding couples bound for the tapestried, red-hung *sala di matrimonio* where the civil ceremony necessary to all Italian marryings,

and sufficing for some, is enacted.

Entering the great building by its portal between Bandinelli's graceless Baucis and Philemon, and under its "fierce tower, standing like a giant sentinel on



his rounds," one comes immediately into Michelozzo's beautiful little court (1434) with its winsome laughing boy of Verrocchio spurting water over his dolphin playmate. So joyful the splashing fountain, so beautiful and quiet the court, one gets at first none of that sense of great things done here in momentous times of storm and stress, in those epoch-making hours throbbled through by hearts of men whose memories still live to glorify or execrate human strength and passion.

It is hard at first to re-create the tumult and shout of mobs, the solemn meetings of councils, the clamor of soldiers, and pomp of warrior princes. It is hard to catch the whispers from stealthy conferences of intrigue and plotting. But the farther one penetrates into this abode of history, the more murmurous become its walls with the echoes of those full days, and the more the shadows moving ghostly through the corridors and halls begin to take recognizable forms of gonfalonier and councilor, of prince and papal legate, of jailer and tortured prisoner of state. In the great hall of the *consiglio grande* sit the shades of the nobles and citizens of Florence; on the floor lies during his last night of life the vision-seeing martyr priest of San Marco; on the walls, under the commonplace frescoes of the profuse and facile Vasari one dimly divines the lost cartoons of Michelangelo and Leonardo da Vinci. What a Mecca of art this room would be had those pictures ever been consummated and preserved! There is no longer any lack of the thrills and the awe and reverence that should come to us from the spaces of this

old castle. The eyes rest lightly on the details of Vasari's and Ghirlandajo's painted walls; on Benedetto da Maiano's delicately sculptured marble doorway and carven ceiling; on Giambologna's ivory crucifix. They are too full of pictures of past scenes.

Nowhere else in Florence, not even in the Duomo where a Medici was murdered and Savonarola won a whole proud city to ways of penitence; nor in the cathedral piazza where, when the city seemed about to be overwhelmed by a great army, and when "every citizen to a man took the oath in the presence of the magistrates, that, true to the government, he would either conquer or die"; nor in the holy walls of San Marco where the falling leader and prophet made his last stand against the wolves of a fickle populace incited by Pope and thwarted prince:—in none of these places gather memories so many or so important in the history of the city as in the Palazzo Vecchio and the blood-hallowed square in front of it.

One climbs, silent and thoughtful, up the long turning stairway of the tower. Far up, just under the machicolated battlements, a little door is pushed open and a tiny cavity in the great stone wall is shown; a mere rat-hole with a narrow stone seat in it. It has a single crack-like outer opening and the door is perforated by a small cross-barred aperture. Here Savonarola shall have spent that time of his forty days' imprisonment, when he was not in the hands of his torturers. The myth speaks well for the persisting picturesqueness of Italian fancy, for this rat-hole more than fulfils all of a New World tourist's demands for an Old World donjon cell. Besides its

impossible limitations of space for Savonarola's long confinement, its fitness is enhanced by the fact that the narrow vertical outer peep-hole gives sight of the great church of Santa Croce, headquarters of the Franciscan enemies of the Dominican priest. However, the larger prison room a few steps higher, in which Cosimo I was imprisoned, is much more likely to have been also the cell of the Medici-fighting monk.

From the top of the tower Florence and its surroundings reveal themselves in bird's-eye view. The larger buildings stand out in their proportions; the lesser ones disappear in a lower continuous red-roofed mass. The Arno winds away seaward, glittering in its broad valley; hill-sides and plain show themselves one continuous plantation of olive and vine; the mountains that stand about Florence everywhere in the distance lift themselves in heavy lines above the nearby villa-dotted hills. Straight down three hundred feet below, curiously foreshortened men and cabs and horses trot about in the busy piazza, like little black whirligig beetles on the smooth surface of a pool. The whirling of these black spots is Florence life of to-day playing across the scene of Savonarola's burning.

As we issue again from Michelozzo's beautiful little colonnaded court we pause on the platform where Michelangelo's David stood, and overlook for a moment the populous piazza. It is a genre scene unpaintable and indescribable in its lack of emphatic points or dominant figures, but unique in its impressionistic whole, its aroma. Out of it, to the right, rise Ammanati's great fountain, with its giant Neptune

and guarding tritons, and Giovanni da Bologna's statue of Cosimo I; while, to the left, lifts the noble Loggia dei Lanzi with its strenuous statues, Cellini's Perseus, Donatello's Judith, and Giovanni da Bo-



"The noble Loggia dei Lanzi with its strenuous statues."

logna's Rape of the Sabines and Hercules Slaying the Centaur Nessus,—statues befitting the scenes of blood and terror that the Loggia looked upon in the troublous centuries long past.

As we stand contemplative and hesitating, suddenly

the noon gun booms, and promptly on the roar the piazza springs into a violent activity. There comes a whirling flight of pigeons up from their feeding-grounds in front of the cafés and a simultaneous great cracking of whips and grinding of wheels as all the Signoria omnibuses lurch forward and coveys of quick cabs flit off into the side streets. It may be our signal as well.

The Bargello is the ancient palace and stronghold of the podestàs and chiefs of police of Florence. In its present peaceful capacity of national museum it loses much of its flavor for those who would like to enjoy in it those thrills that the Tower of London or the Conciergerie in Paris gives in such full measure. But when the *guida autorizzata* of the Palazzo Vecchio leads you solemnly up to a window giving a view out over the nearby roofs, and whispers heavily,

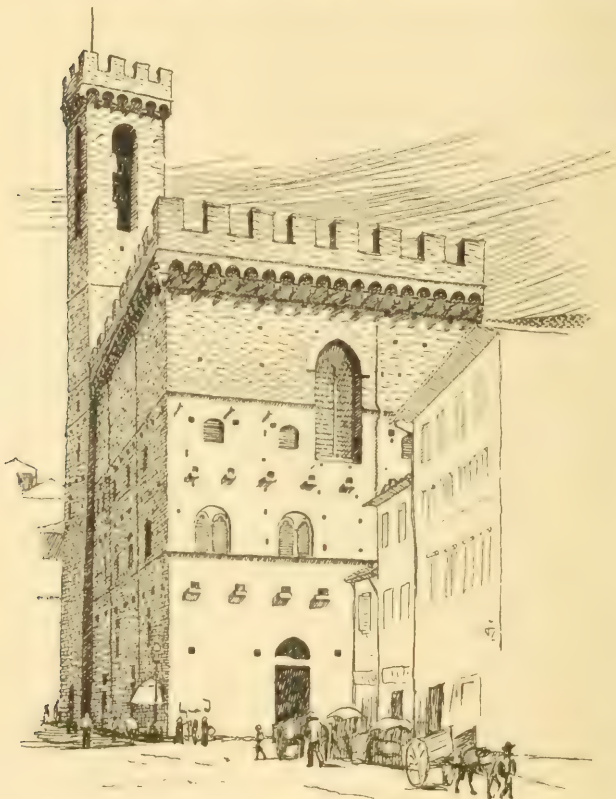
“There—there in the dungeons of the Bargello they took him to torture him,”

—him being Savonarola, of course, the Bargello offers at long distance a very real thrill, indeed. But when you once enter it, are really in it, have got quickly through its first room of armor and guns and sabers, and into its court of magic beauty, you lose at once, nor desire any more at all, any thrills of the morbid. There are in you now and to renew themselves in you for all of your stay here only thrills from the beautiful; from the wonderfully beautiful court and stair; from the beautiful upper loggia, the Verone; the beautiful great halls and high-ceilinged



little chapel, and from the varied beauty of the many triumphs of art in this castle of joy.

To catalogue the sources of this joy is far from



"The Bargello is the ancient palace and stronghold of the podestàs and chiefs of police of Florence."

my intention. There is much to see, and each will have his special likes. Some things will almost certainly appeal to all. First of all, the marvelous Bar-





Photo. Brogi

THE VIRGIN AND CHILD  
Michelangelo: Bargello



gello court with Agnolo Gaddi's stairs and the great arches below and the smaller ones of the Orcagna loggia above; the well in the center near which the old executions took place, and the towering walls spotted thick with the varied and fantastic stemmi of the two hundred and more podestàs of Florence. One surrenders at once and unquestioningly to the rare charm of this famous court.

A door leading off from it opens into a short corridor on which lies the small Michelangelo room containing several works of his earlier life, the Bacchus, the young David, the small Moses, and a charming unfinished tondo relief of the Virgin and Child, the boy standing with his elbow resting on an open book in the mother's lap. In this room, too, are the mutilated remains of Benedetto da Rovezzano's masterpiece, reliefs containing many small figures of exquisite workmanship. The story of the making and destruction of these sculptures is told elsewhere in this book.

Most celebrated of the Bargello rooms is that called the Hall of Donatello. It is splendid in itself, with its high ceiling, double tier of windows piercing the thick walls, and rich air of spaciousness. But its contents, a Donatello collection of originals and casts, uncrowded and most effectively placed, are its real attraction. Here is that San Giorgio taken from its niche in the outer wall of Or San Michele, and now given the position of honor between the youthful Goliath-conquering David on one side and the more than ascetic John the Baptist on the other. In front of this group are the Young Gentleman

in bronze and the realistic Uzzano bust in colored terra-cotta. A score or more of casts of Donatello's reliefs and statues in other cities, especially Padua, line the walls of the room, and a cast of his giant equestrian statue of Gattamelata (Padua) towers up in the center. In front of it squats the Marzocco (original) that used to sit on the old Palazzo Vecchio platform called the Ringhiera. Altogether this hall is an opportunity and a delight to lovers of the little Donato.

In a nearby little room filled with small bronzes and reliefs are the two trial reliefs of the scene of Abraham and Isaac done by Brunelleschi and Ghiberti in competition for the commission to do the bronze doors of the Baptistry. The justice of the decision for Ghiberti is quickly evident. Brunelleschi makes the real scene, the sacrifice interrupted by the angel, only a sort of upper story incident while the waiting horse and two attendant figures below stand most conspicuous. Ghiberti with all the same figures in his composition—probably a stipulation of the competition—tucks his horse and attendants neatly and undistractingly away into small compass, leaving Abraham, Isaac, and the angel their rightful center of the stage.

In the adjoining room are Cellini's little wax and bronze models (differing slightly) for his Perseus in the Loggia dei Lanzi,—he tells of these little models, with characteristically entertaining egotism, in the last chapter of his "Treatise on Sculpture,"—and an animated framed relief of Perseus liberating Andromeda, with all the characters. There are also in this room a whole series of Giovanni da Bologna's

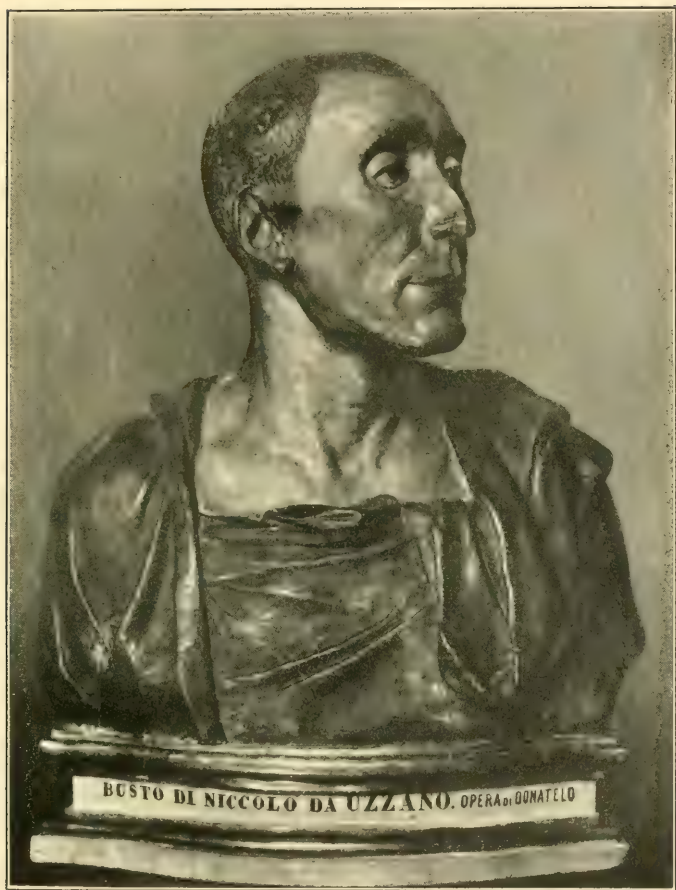


Photo. Brogi

NICCOLÒ DA UZZANO  
Donatello: Bargello





bronzes, among them his patched flying Mercury with its inimitable air of lightness, a small model of his Rape of the Sabines of the Loggia, and two charming *putti* with fish evidently designed for a fountain. Here is also a delightful small bronze head of a boy, attributed, but with some growing uncertainty, to Desiderio da Settignano.

In the chapel, a small room entered from the saloon of tapestries, cloths, ivories, and enamels, with its *intarsia* stalls, is the famous Dante death mask; and in the fresco of Paradise above it, the restored portrait of Dante holding a flower—(this head has been redrawn as a framed picture below hanging at the right of the mask). These apparently authentic portrayals of Dante's face are of much interest, and reveal the inaccuracy of many of the more familiar portraits.

On the floor above are the rooms of the della Robbia reliefs. These glazed and colored terracottas, the secret of whose making was held in the della Robbia family and died with it, appeal with curious difference of response to different beholders. Especially is this true of the parti-colored examples. For the simple blue and white pieces, especially those of unelaborate decoration, where the eye is filled by the exquisitely modeled faces of Virgin and Child (the favorite subject), there can hardly be anything but admiration. But this cannot be so certainly claimed for the more richly decorated and brilliantly colored pieces. The two rooms containing these tondos and plaques give one an exceptional opportunity to compare the work of the first members of

the family, Luca and Andrea, the real masters, with the growingly inferior ones of the later workers.

Finally in rooms IV and V of this floor we come to chambers hard to escape from, so rich are they in reliefs, busts, and statuettes of the masters of Tuscan decorative sculpture. Here all the hill-side sculptors are represented, Desiderio, the Rossellini, Benedetto da Maiano, Mino da Fiesole. And here also are characteristic pieces by Verrocchio, Michelozzo, Sansovino, Luca della Robbia, Pollaiuolo, Giovanni da Bologna, Cellini, Matteo Civitali of Lucca, and, shameless to behold, a fragment of decorative relief from Jacopa della Quercia's tomb of Ilaria in the cathedral at Lucca. Some of the desecration of that loveliest of tombs has been repaired by the tardy return, through the intervention of the good queen-mother of Italy, of the reliefs ravished from the ends of the sarcophagus, but Florence still has the hardihood to retain this purchased fragment.

It is difficult in such wealth of achievement to attempt to call attention to any particular pieces, but I may mention Verrocchio's speaking relief for the tomb of Francesca Tornabuoni and the *Ecce Homo*, and two nearby reliefs of Matteo Civitali, that rare sculptor of Lucca whose work is seen so little outside of his native city. Then there is Antonio Rossellino's marble tondo of the Adoration with its beautifully detailed background, the sheep and cow and shed and trees, a complete landscape. Also I must mention Benedetto da Maiano's John the Baptist, and Jacopo Sansovino's Bacchus, and Cellini's Ganymede.

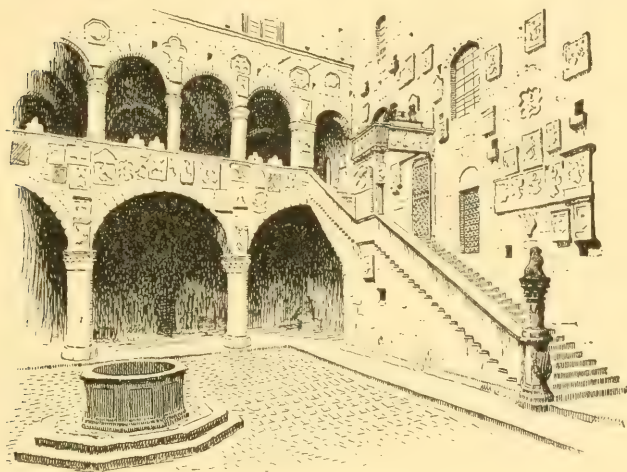


Photo. Brogi

MADONNA WITH CHILD  
Luca della Robbia: Bargello



If one has a fancy for delicately moulded faces in low relief, the room of medallions with its veritable gallery of Medici portraits in miniature, and its scores of other faces of the great days of old, can furnish entertainment for long hours. But sight-



“That most fascinating room of all the Bargello, that unroofed room of the arcades, the well, the stair, and the stemmi-spotted walls.”

seeing with a reading glass becomes tiring in time, and there is that most fascinating room of all the Bargello, always calling; that unroofed room of the arcades, the well, the stair, and the stemmi-spotted walls. And so one finds oneself again in the court, the unsurpassable court; and stays there till closing time.

Finally, in any chapter under such a title as this one has, it must at least be noted that Florence has two fortress castles of some importance that are rarely

visited. These are the Fortezza di San Giorgio on the hilltop across the Arno, built in 1590 by the Grand Duke Ferdinand; and the Fortezza da Basso, at the opposite end of the city, built by the Medici Pope, Clement VII, as a stronghold for Alessandro de Medici, ruler of Florence. Here the great banker Filippo Strozzi, who had actually lent money to the Medici to build this fortress, was imprisoned, and either put to death or reduced to such hopelessness of freedom as to commit suicide.



## CHAPTER XII

### CASTLES AND PALACES (CONTINUED)

#### THE PALACES

OF the hundred palaces of Florence, those familiar, heavy, fortress-like fourteenth and fifteenth century structures, with their massive rough-faced or stucco-covered stone walls, their iron lanterns and torch-holders, and their carved stemmi over portal or at wall-corners, we can mention but half a dozen. The interested tourist may engage some more leisurely cicerone for introduction to the others. Mrs. Ross's "Florentine Palaces" is the most available aid, perhaps, although it gives less of architectural and descriptive details of the palaces themselves than of biographical particulars of the old families that builded and inhabited them. It is, indeed, a sort of blue book of the first families of *quattro* and *cinque cento* Florence; a mass of interesting material, delved from old chronicles and manuscripts. It records the loves and hates, the poisonings and poniardings of these picturesque gentlemen and ruffians and their fair ladies, of the Florence of the Medici, the Strozzi, the Soderini, the Capponi, Pazzi, and Pitti. As one reads these scrappy particulars of

the lives of the old Florentines one wonders no longer at the massive stone walls, the few windows, the battlements, and towers of their palace dwellings. It was certainly well, in those days, to be able to bar one's door effectively to any too pressing neighbors.

To-day we are likely, unless more interested in Florentine history than Florentine art, to visit first, and perhaps only, those palaces in which artistic treasures remain or have been specially gathered. Most conspicuous in this respect is the regal Pitti, with its world-famed galleries. The events, however, in the history of this palace have been of much importance, outlining in some degree the whole history of Florence.

The palace was begun in 1441 by Luca, of the great Pitti banker family, rivals of the Medici, with the expressed intention of surpassing the Medici palace (Palazzo Riccardi). It was begun by Brunelleschi and carried on by Ammanati, and in later times enlarged and variously modified under the direction of Parigi, Ruggieri, and others. By the vicissitudes of fortune it soon passed from the hands of the Pitti into those of their rivals the Medici; and since then has been constantly identified with the ruling family of Florence whether Italian, French, or Austrian.

In addition to the paintings and sculptures (already referred to in the chapters "The Galleries") the Pitti palace contains extensive collections of china and of silver- and goldsmithery, besides the handsome furniture and fittings of the royal apartments; for the Pitti is the abode of the King of Italy whenever

he comes to Florence. The rooms of the royal plate and other treasures of gold and silver work are of much interest, for they house some of Cellini's most magnificent cups and bowls. These are treasures which are especially known and loved by the common people of the city. When our cook was most excited over the preparations for a company dinner she would exclaim:

"Our table must look as beautiful as if we had the Cellini bowls and plates on it."

And although she had never known the use of finger-bowls she recognized at once what ours were for, crying:

"Oh, those are little ones like the big ones that Cellini made."

In one of the rooms of the royal apartments are two striking paintings by Botticelli, one a Madonna with roses and the other the curiously composed Pallas, discovered in the palace in 1894 by an English artist, and held by many to be one of the most rarely beautiful of Botticelli's works.

Behind and above the five hundred feet of length of the Pitti palace, are the Boboli Gardens (entered through the portal near the entrance to the gallery). They are an excellent example of the formal Italian style of landscape gardening. There are many long, straight, hedge-lined alleys and paths with the vistas closed by fountains or statues, and there are stone and stucco structures of various sorts and degrees of beauty or ugliness. In the latter category the palm is held by the Grotto (near the entrance), which contains four great unfinished statues reputed to be

Michelangelo's beginnings for the Captives which were to adorn the never completed tomb of Pope Julius II in Rome. These four unfortunates in their



In the Boboli Gardens.

Grotto suffer a most atrocious captivity in their present setting. The gardens as a whole, however, are very beautiful and offer a delightful resting-place to the footsore and eye-weary pursuer of "sights."



Photo. Brogi

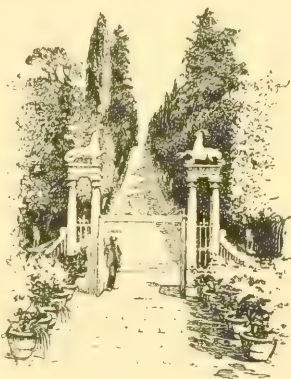
LORENZO DE' MEDICI AS ONE OF THE MAGI  
Benozzo Gozzoli: Palazzo Riccardi





Also he can see, particularly on Sundays, how truly these gardens belong to the people.

That palace of the Medici now known as the Palazzo Riccardi and serving as the city's Prefettura, is the one that Luca Pitti set out to surpass only to have his labors enjoyed, at their end, by his hated rivals. Next to the Pitti (and Uffizi) it contains the most precious treasures of art housed in any Florentine palace; for in it is that wholly lovely and joyous little chapel frescoed by Benozzo Gozzoli. If this is not the most fascinating and enlivening little room in all Europe, as some hold stoutly, it is at least no mean second to whatever that more entrancing room may be. Here is the joy, the color, the life of Medicean Florence animate on flat walls. It assumes to be a holy picture as befits the place and the art tradition of the time; a Procession of the Magi; but all that is in it of humanity and Nature is insistently and secularly Florentine. As in the frescoes of Ghirlandajo behind the great altar of Santa Maria Novella, the pictured people of Gozzoli and their setting are of the painter's personal acquaintance. Here are Cosimo and Lorenzo dei Medici, the painter's patrons, and here is the joyous artist himself. And the procession winds its pageantry and



Boboli Cypresses.

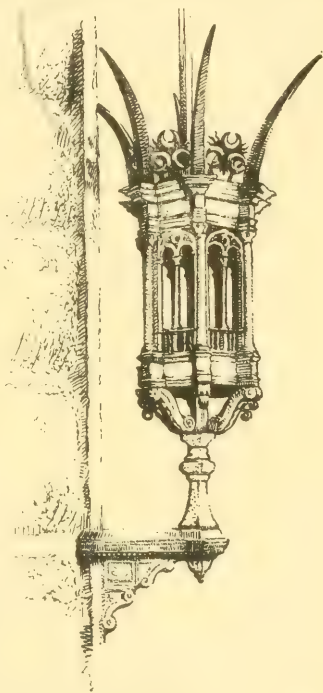
caroling life down the hill-slopes of Fiesole and Settignano. The caretaker of the chapel is a man of intelligence and enthusiasm, as he should be with such a charge in his care. His exploring lantern on its long pole and his facile running commentary as he slowly moves over all the walls are a part of my memory of the little room that I would not lose if I could. And how exceptional that is!

Besides these chapel pictures there is Luca Giordano's swiftly painted apotheosis of the Medici in the banqueting hall, a hall whose ornate decorative walls and ceiling recall the great corridor in Versailles. Other rooms and halls have, too, their attractions; but of greater interest are the memories clinging to these chambers and corridors of the lives of that extraordinary family that made this modest palace its abode. Here poetry and statecraft, love of beauty and of power, philosophic broadness, and personal malice lived hand in hand. History was made here in days whose nights were revels of trivial pleasure. It is a palace whose very stones must have absorbed some essence of all this human greatness and frailty that they guarded for so long.

Most striking and most familiar of all of Florence's cubical fortress palaces is the great Strozzi (corner Via degli Strozzi and Via Tornabuoni). Its huge *bozzi*, its convenient *sedilia* smoothed by much picturesque use, its splendid though incomplete overhanging cornice and its beautiful corner lanterns (*fanali*) of worked iron become very familiar to even the most hurried visitor to Florence. He cannot help walking or driving by the palace a half-dozen

times a day; it is so in the very center of the tourist's Florence. He will look out on its massive rough walls each time he sips his tea at Giacosa's; and he will usually buy his morning paper from one of the *giornalisti* that spread their wares on the sedilia at its corner.

The Strozzi, wealthy bankers, were for long a powerful family, sometimes friends, sometimes rivals of the Medici. The decline of the family began with the death of the famous Filippo in the Medicean fortress of San Giovanni Battista (now Fortezza da Basso). The palace, which still belongs to the family, was built in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries according to the designs of Benedetto da Maiano and later Il Cronaca. Within there is a



A corner lantern of the Palazzo Strozzi.

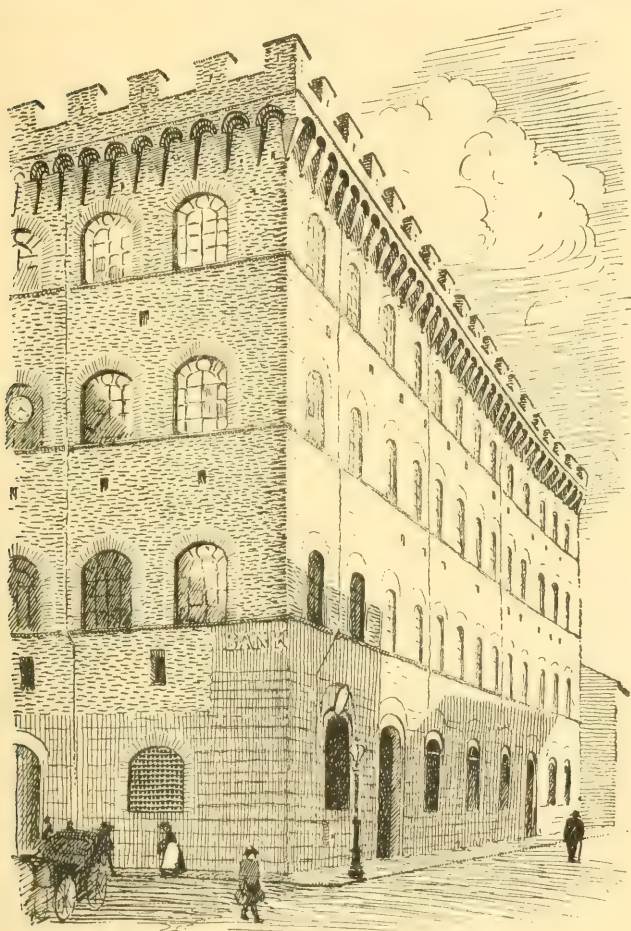
small collection of pictures and marbles by painters and sculptors of the first rank. This collection, unfortunately, has steadily diminished under the constant pressure of the enormous building debt, a debt that has persisted through five centuries.

Another palace conspicuous by its great size, its

battlemented walls, and made familiar by its situation and its present use by the banking house of French, Lemon and Company (American Express Co.), is that now named Palazzo Ferroni, but better known as Palazzo Spini (on the Piazza Santa Trinità just at the bridge). It was built about 1300 by the Spini, a family whose head was a wealthy wool merchant and the leader of the Florentine Guelphs. In the middle of the seventeenth century half of the palace passed, by purchase, into the hands of the Ferroni family, and the other half in 1807. "The southern façade rose straight from the bed of the Arno, and the street passed under the palace by a long archway. Room after room and balcony after balcony overhanging the river had been built until the height reached sixty *braccie* and grave fears were entertained for the stability of the building. So in July, 1823, that side of the Palazzo Spini was taken down and the façade thrown back to admit of the continuation of the Lung' Arno Acciajuoli. In the church of Santa Trinità (just across the street from the palace) is a fresco by Domenico Ghirlandajo, in which Palazzo Spini is represented as it was in the fifteenth century" (Ross). The palace contains some fine vaulted upper chambers that are in present use as clubrooms.

At No. 20, Via della Vigna Nuova, is the beautiful Palazzo Rucellai, a fifteenth century structure built by Bernardo Rossellino after designs by Leon Battista Alberti, for the great Rucellai family, cloth merchants and bankers. This family gave to Florence thirteen gonfalonieri and eighty-five priors, and

was honored, or perhaps dishonored, by intermarrying with the Medici. The palace contains some curi-



Palazzo Spini.

ous old portraits, and the courtyard has admirable Corinthian pillars. In the Rucellai loggia (now



inclosed and used as a picture shop) opposite the palace "the citizens of Florence used to meet and discuss their affairs . . . and after the introduction of the game of chess from the East such large sums of money were lost [here] at dice, draughts, and chess, that a law was passed forbidding any games to be played in courtyards, porticoes, or loggie."

Palazzo Pandolfino (No. 74, Via San Gallo), an unfinished fifteenth century palace of unusual design, with very fine portal and Ionic and Doric windows, is reputed to have been begun from a plan by Raphael. In the Via del Proconsolo, No. 10, is a striking palace called Palazzo Quaratesi built by the Pazzi in the fifteenth century, after plans by Brunelleschi. This is the great family of rivals and haters of the Medici, whose hate culminated in the murder of Giuliano and wounding of Lorenzo dei Medici by Francesco dei Pazzi in the Duomo in April, 1478, and the subsequent hanging of Francesco and some of his companions from the battlements of the Palazzo Vecchio. It was a member of this family, Pazzino di Pazzi, who is said to have been the first to scale the walls of Jerusalem in the Crusades, and who brought from the Holy Sepulcher the stones from which was lighted the Holy Fire. On Saturday of Passion Week every year this Holy Fire is carried by the dove from the high altar of the Duomo out to the fireworks car in the Piazza. Great crowds attend this performance, and it is one of Florence's chief annual spectacles.

In the Via Ghibellina one's attention may be attracted by eight heavy, low decorated marble *pili*



rising from the sidewalk in front of a massive palace. This is the Palazzo Borghese built originally by the Salviati family. In it lived until recently Franceschini, a book collector of indefatigable industry but much eccentricity. On his death Voynich, the London dealer, bought his collection, "sight unseen," and is now engaged in the Herculean but fascinating task of exhuming from sealed and completely filled rooms the masses of books and pamphlets which the eccentric collector piled away. The collection will certainly number over a million pieces and in it have been found already a number of valuable *incunabula* and, stuffed as "filling" into thick binding of commonplace tomes, such interesting things as illustrated Medici playing cards and Strozzi wedding invitations.

An interesting palace open to the sightseer on certain days in the week is the seventeenth century Corsini (No. 7, Via Parioni), with splendid halls and hangings and a collection of pictures. The Corsini have been one of the greatest families in Florence from time unremembered. Pope Clement XII was a Corsini, and the family tree is a veritable blue book of cardinals, bishops, priors, and princes of state.

This catalogue of Florentine palaces could run on for many pages. But it must stop right here. Or, at least, it must stop with the bare outlining of a walk that I can recommend to any one wishing a glimpse of some of the older, more rugged, and less conspicuous palaces that cluster so thickly in the narrow streets near the Arno.

Start may be made from the Mercato Nuovo, that of the flowers and straw hats and the big bronze

boar; and the way may lead first down the Via Por Santa Maria toward the river. Here on either hand are the remains of the palaces of the Amidei. At No. 5, which is the tower of the Palazzo Lambertesca and in the little church of San Stefano near it (just off the street), was plotted the murder of young Buondelmonte, that homicide that was so large a part of the beginning of the Guelph-Ghibelline war in Florence.

Opposite the Lambertesca Tower is the picturesque tower of the Girolami, both of these antedating the days of Medicean rule. Turn into the Borgo SS. Apostoli, right, and follow along its dark, narrow way between continuous relics of the old palace-fortress days. Here are the old palace of the Altoviti (near the little church of SS. Apostoli in the Piazza del Limbo) and the Palazzo Borgherini (No. 15), containing some good pictures and bearing a relief of the Virgin and Child by Benedetto da Rovezzano on its angle-wall. In narrow streets near here, the Via delle Terme and others, are numerous remains of old and historic structures.

We issue from the narrow Borgo SS. Apostoli into the always animated Piazza Santa Trinità. At our left is the Palazzo Salimbeni, and adjoining it Palazzo Buondelmonte with Miss Zimmern's beautiful roof-garden on its top. It faces the north wall of Palazzo Spini, whose south face is on the river. The short stretch of the Via Tornabuoni is almost entirely made up of old palaces refurbished and changed to suit the requirements of shopkeepers and clubmen. Along the river front, too, Lung' Arno Acciajuoli and

Lung' Arno Corsini, running both ways from the bridge, is a whole line of palaces and historic houses turned into hotels and pensions.

We cross the beautiful bridge and leave its south end between Palazzo Frescobaldi at the left and Palazzo Capponi on the right. The Capponi family has numerous claims to celebrity, but none more valid than old Pier Capponi's inspired reply to Charles VIII, who attempted to coerce the Florentine during a treaty conference by the threat:

"Sign as I have dictated or we shall blow our trumpets."

"And we, Sire, shall ring our bells."

We turn sharply to the left into Borgo San Jacopo. Here is another line of mutilated old towers and palaces, including, on the right, Palazzo Rossi (corner of the Via Guicciardini), Palazzo Ridolfo, Palazzo Belfredelli, and the tower of Palazzo Marsili opposite the church of San Jacopo. On the left are the towers of the Barbadori and Lotti and the Palazzo Corno with a fine fourteenth century court.

From the Borgo San Jacopo we come into the noisy little piazza at the end of the Ponte Vecchio. Here in the corner of a house wall is a fountain above which is the niche, now filled by a Bacchus, in which was the statue of Mars, at whose feet the murdered young Buondelmonte fell. Across the street, the Via Guicciardini, rises the old tower of Palazzo Mannelli "where Boccaccio frequently visited his friend and transcriber, Francesco de' Mannelli." And here we enter the Via de' Bardi along

which are the remains of the many palaces and houses of this famous family and its retainers. A score or more were inhabited by the insolent Bardi at the time of the great uprising against them of the citizens; and the final sacking and burning of these palaces took place only after a prolonged and desperate struggle. The weak point in the Bardi's position was the swiftly rising hill behind them. It was from this dominating point that the besieging citizens finally made their successful assaults.

The Via de' Bardi wanders on up the river to the Piazza Mozzi, on which lie the attractive old Mozzi palace and garden (No. 3) associated with much of the important history of the Guelph-Ghibelline struggle. Here also is the large Palazzo Torrigiani (No. 6). "It was the insult offered by Giuliano Salviati (son of Landomia dei Medici and intimate of Duke Alessandro) to Luisa Strozzi at a masked ball here in 1534 that began the feud between the Medici and Strozzi."

Farther up the river rises the new Palazzo Seristori. It is built upon the old one in which Malatesta Baglione, the treacherous and compromising military chief of Florence at the time of the siege of the city by the Papal-Imperial army in 1530, had his headquarters. And with this egregiously new specimen we may end our search for relics of those fierce proud days of embattled Florence in her towers and fortress-palaces.

## CHAPTER XIII

### STRAY PICTURES ON MONASTERY WALLS

ONE may or may not have a fancy for hunting down stray pictures; peering at half-empty lunettes over doorways in dark alleys; inveigling an elusive caretaker to open a street-corner oratory so long closed that spiders have webbed its weathered shutters together; or finding a way to scattered chapels of old convents turned into hospitals or palaces made over into warehouses. This may all be very exciting and very good sport for some, for others no sport at all.

One would think, perhaps, that a picture, not being four-legged like a fox, would need no special pursuing or persistence to trace to its hole and capture. My metaphor limps, for it is precisely when the fox gets into its hole that it doesn't get captured. However, with the stray picture it is different. With the help of Hare or Horner, or anybody else who has been there before, you locate it and go after it. It is there; it stays there all the time; but you come on the wrong day, or on the wrong hour of the right day, or you get drawn aside by a nearby tempting church, or a new shop for old brasses. You keep postponing



this simple, easy little thing for the sake of more Herculean tasks yet unfinished.

But in persistence there is victory—and compensation. For there is great reward, oftentimes, in the overtaking of the stray pictures in Florence. To find them all, however, would be an undertaking of many days; more days, certainly, than a merely temporary Florentine could give to it. So we may limit ourselves to those especially interesting ones to be found still in the place where they were first set; those frescoes that reverent hands put upon the walls of monasteries and convents. These pictures were the inspiration and the guide of the faithful; the perpetual reminder of the pain and joys of the devoted life.

With the gradual taking over by the government of the monasteries and convents of Florence and their conversion into public offices, courts, hospitals, and barracks, many frescoed wall surfaces have been doomed to sudden destruction by wreckers and white-washers or to more gradual extinguishment by the dust and grime of neglect. The juxtaposition of extreme modernity and practicality with art and mystic piety which this modern use of the old monasteries brings about occasionally, is startling. A physician took me one day to the exceedingly up-to-date institute for phototherapy near the great hospital of Santa Maria Nuova. Here is installed a very elaborate equipment for the treatment of certain malignant diseases by the application of Roentgen rays, Finsen light, high potential electric currents, and the like. And here also over a door in the little courtyard the white-aproned operator of electricity and Roentgen



rays shows you with a curious apologetic smile, "if you have any interest in art, perhaps," a fading fresco of one of the Ghirlandajos!

Often the conversion of the monasteries was so sudden and unlooked for that not even the removable art treasures could be saved. Thus is accounted for the sadly mutilated condition of the sculptures that one sees in the museums. A most pitiful and terrible example of this kind of disaster is afforded by those exquisite remnants in the Bargello of the reliefs that Benedetto da Rovezzano carved for ten years for the adorning of the tomb of S. Giovanni Gualberto. The artist was working in the Palazzo del Guarleone, outside the walls of the city, when the Papal-Imperial army encamped in the neighborhood to besiege Florence. The palace was taken possession of for a temporary barracks by the imperial soldiers, who amused themselves by breaking off all the heads of the delicate little relief figures and finally by the total demolition of most of the results of the long labor.

Perhaps most important and most interesting of these monastery frescoes are the four scattered *cenacoli* of Andrea del Sarto, Andrea Castagno, Domenico Ghirlandajo, and Raphael, respectively, and the pictures on the walls of San Marco. The Andrea del Sarto *cenacolo* in San Salvi only narrowly escaped destruction at the same time that Rovezzano's masterpiece was ruined. But its danger came from the Florentines themselves in their patriotic eagerness to sacrifice all their own dwellings in the suburbs that might give shelter to the enemy. "On the

24th" (July, 1529), says Grimm in his "Life of Michelangelo," "the destruction of the suburbs began. The houses were broken down with battering-rams such as the ancients used; trees and underwood in the gardens were hewn down and manufactured into fascines. Houses, palaces, and churches fell to the ground. . . . The possessors of the buildings often helped most eagerly in their ruin. So thoroughly did the spirit of freedom dwell in the mass of the people, and only in a few of the richest families was any resistance manifested to sacrificing what belonged to them.

"In this work of destruction there occurred one of those little natural marvels which witness to the power of art over men. A number of peasants and soldiers were engaged in demolishing the monastery of San Salvi. A part of the building lay already in ruins when they reached the refectory, where, as was usual, the Last Supper was painted on the large wall. This work, which is still standing at the present day on the half-destroyed walls, fresh and in good preservation, as if all had only just occurred, is a fresco painting of Andrea del Sarto, and is one of the finest things he has produced."

Taking a tram (either for Settignano or for Rovezzano) from the Duomo, one asks to be set off at the point nearest San Salvi. From here, with the graceful square campanile of the old church for guide, it is but a few rods to the little Piazza de San Salvi. The entrance to the refectory (the single word "cenacolo" spoken to any urchin in the piazza will produce an instant guide) lies in the Via San Salvi a few

steps from the piazza. You pass through a small garden, then a long corridor lined with numerous casts of the school of Canova, go through an anteroom containing a cast of Jacopo della Quercia's wonderful Ilaria Guinigi tomb in the cathedral of Lucca, and at last enter the fine old refectory room. The cenacolo covers one end wall and has over it a broad arch bearing frescoes of four saints and the Trinity. The picture is so fresh (only one small defacement, a blotch on the face of St. Simeon, mars it), and the colors are so vivid, that it is hard to realize the years that have passed since del Sarto worked here. The figures all show an unusual activity and grace. The Christ has just declared that he will be betrayed by one among them, whereupon three of the disciples have leaped to their feet, while all look and lean toward the Christ figure. St. John and St. James are on either hand of the central figure, St. John with a most beautiful face, and St. James with his hand on his breast, evidently much startled at hearing Christ's words. The quiet, restful, empty room, well lighted and of beautiful proportions, makes a fine setting for the expressive picture, and one may get an enjoyment here that great masterpieces, in their unnatural crowded setting in galleries, fail to give. Indeed, it is under such circumstances as these that we come to realize how much we lose by being compelled to see pictures torn from their proper setting and jumbled together in a great museum. The Uffizi, says Maurice Hewlett, is a great shambles where 2,000 Madonnas are strangling 2,000 *bimbi*! A cenacolo in a refectory can be a picture of power, even when

done by a weak artist; so much does it gain in significance and message by its setting.

In quite another direction from the Duomo must we set out to run down our second quarry, the *cenacolo* of Andrea Castagno in the convent of Sant' Apollonia (corner Via San Gallo and Via 27 Aprile). Here is a picture of curious realism. The painter has selected and closely followed Jewish models for the faces of his figures. Rugged, coarse, black-bearded Jews of the common people, typical Jews of the Ghetto, this peasant painter has set about the Holy Table. But there is great strength and seriousness in the composition.

Besides the *cenacolo*, the room (the old chapel hall of the convent) contains a number of interesting frescoes removed here from a villa. They include curious figures of Dante, Petrarch, Boccaccio, and certain famous Florentine warriors, notably the Ghibelline leader Farinata degli Uberti, "savior of the city." More attractive are figures of the two Sibyls and Esther (half-length over the door). Above the *cenacolo* are the Crucifixion, Entombment, and Resurrection. The whole little chamber is of exceeding interest.

In still another quarter of the city is Domenico Ghirlandajo's Last Supper (1400) in the old refectory in the cloisters of the church of Ognissanti (enter at No. 34, Borgo Ognissanti). The first impression, as one enters the long, rather low-ceilinged room, is one of cheer and out-of-doorsness. The light, if the day is bright,—and for the most pleasure from this picture a day of full sun should be chosen,—is



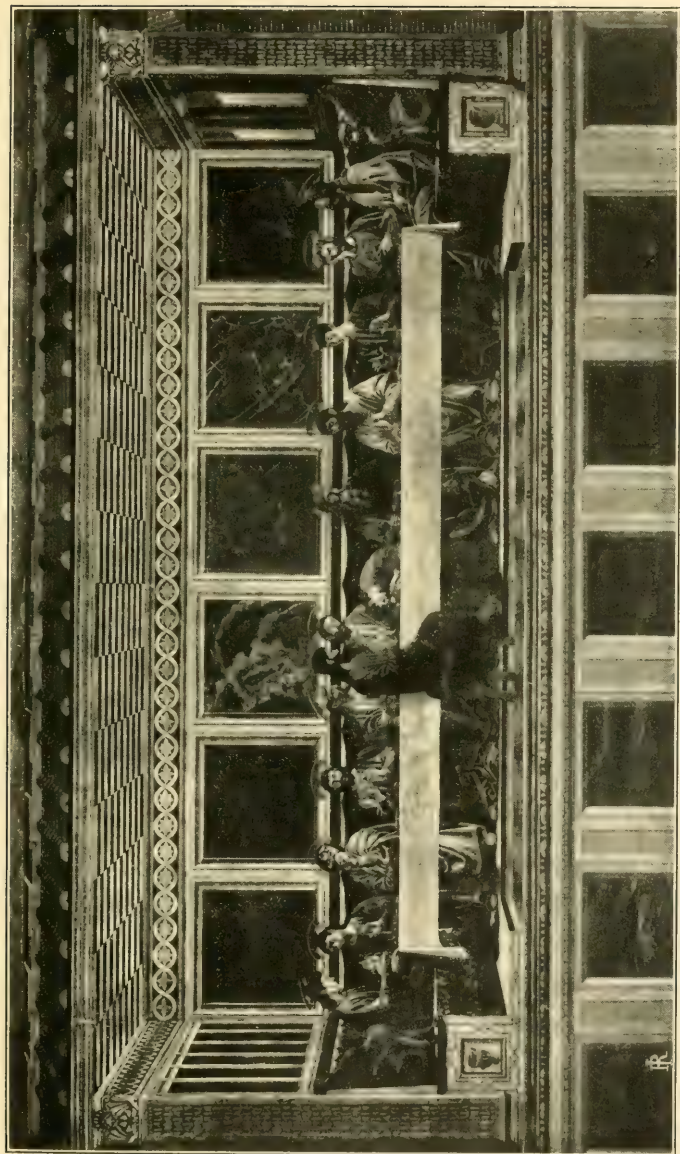


Photo. Brogi

THE LAST SUPPER  
Andrea del Castagno: Santa Appollonia





very good and makes the whole picture, with its richly laden fruit trees and flying birds and its cheerful coloring, seem a vista of some sweet garden. The supper scene is of conventional type, the sleeping John fallen forward on the table and Judas sitting alone at the front. The faces are mostly full of interest, and a general animation pervades the whole group. Bread, wine, and cherries are on the stiffly-creased new table-cloth, and a peacock and dove look down on the scene from two upper narrow side windows cut in the thick wall. Very similar to this picture in composition and detail is that other one by the same master in the small refectory of the monastery of San Marco. Here, too, are the joyous cheer and light, the leaves and flowers and fruit and birds of a sub-tropical garden. And here again the peacock and dove look down in quiet wonder on the group at the long table.

Even more decorative in treatment, although of very different manner, is that last cenacolo of our list in the old convent of San Onofrio, now partly a hospital and partly a sort of little dependence of the Uffizi Gallery. The picture has been variously attributed to Raphael, to Raphael and Perugino jointly, to Neri de Bicci, to Gerino da Pistoja, to Giannicola Manni, and to others. The sacristan, perhaps not a wholly disinterested critic, declares the three figures at the right end of the table and the single figure at the extreme left to be the work of Raphael, the others and the rest of the picture to be that of Perugino. On the yoke of the garment of one of these Raphael figures (the handsome St. Thomas)

is an inscription to the effect that " Raphael did this." And, indeed, this St. Thomas and, perhaps, particularly St. James major (the end figure at the left), are figures distinctly in Raphael's manner. Joseph Hopital maintains stoutly that the whole work reveals itself by its character and technic to be unmistakably the work of Raphael. " That it was of Raphael," he says, " was not doubted by those who discovered it in 1845 under the soot which concealed it. And this M. Vitel has tried to prove in his ' Études sur l'Histoire de l'Art ' (T. III, Raphael à Florence). . . . But Italian erudition and German science have found this attribution too simple."

All the disciples have golden glories and the arrangement is the conventional one. The coverings of the table and long seat have a decorative pattern, while above (behind) the supper table are numerous pillars with delicate tracery, among which appear vistas of garden and landscape. In the middle one of these spaces over the three central figures of the supper is a beautiful picture of the agony in the night at Gethsemane, with the disciples sleeping and an angel presenting the cup of bitterness to Christ. The whole picture produces an effect of decoration and delicate lightness of treatment which may to some detract from the seriousness of its significance. The small size of the figures at the supper table in proportion to the rest of the picture may, perhaps, add to this feeling of lack of dignity and seriousness. It is a decorative cenacolo as compared, for example, with the deadly serious one of Andrea Castagno in Sant' Apollonia.

In the well-lighted room of this Cenacolo di Foligno are hung some fifty or more original drawings and engravings of other cenacoli, as well as some that were never carried beyond the first conception stage. They form an extremely interesting and valuable series for the student, as well as for the casual sightseer. These drawings, together with the various mostly undistinguished pictures on the walls of the anterooms and corridor, belong to the Uffizi collection, having come to it as a gift from the Ferroni family. Among the pictures are two by Carlo Dolci, of which one is held to be in his best manner.

Like the other monastery walls of Florence, those of historic Dominican San Marco belong no more to the monks, echo no more to the matin and vesper bells, the chant and response, the muttered mumbling of the hours. But unlike many of the others they do not serve to inclose soldiers and horses, or courts of law or hospital wards. Their decorations are zealously guarded, the cloister gardens kept green and flowering, and as one strolls through room and corridor he may summon up, if the mind be well steeped in the lore of earlier times and the heart and imagination sympathetic and lively, a most vivid picture; so responsive is the atmosphere of those peaceful days and wild, when Fra Angelico painted and Savonarola prayed in San Marco's inclosure.

In many ways no more satisfying hours can be spent by the temporary Florentine than those given to the unhindered, quiet, almost solitary rambling through the arcades and halls of San Marco. The cloister gardens with their great tree and old well, the

## 176 Stray Pictures on Monastery Walls

frescoed arcade walls, the gathered relics of Old Florence and its palaces, the marvelous Crucifixion



The cloisters of San Marco.

in the chapter house, the cenacolo in the refectory, and that wonderful, great loft with its unique series of embellished cells under the bare, rough timbers and overlying tiles of the roof; and, finally, everywhere the abiding and contrasted presence of the peaceful, meek, consecrated painter monk and the vision-driven, fanatical, trumpeting, doomed preacher monk:—all these

are the sort to make a memory that lasts.

One comes by the piazza entrance directly into the first cloisters and under the outstretched benedictory arms of its great singing tree. Around this little garden the arcade walls are all fresco-covered with the story of the life of St. Antoninus, the first prior of the monastery and later archbishop of Florence, a man of great piety and modesty advanced to place and power against his most earnest wish. Scattered among these more modern frescoes are five or six of

Fra Angelico's, mostly small ones over the doors, but one filling a whole panel, a pitiful Crucifixion. Besides the Christ, there is but a single figure, St. Dominic, kneeling at the foot of the cross. Among the smaller pictures, that of Christ as a pilgrim being received by two Dominicans, and the face of St. Peter Martyr with finger to lip expressing silence, hold one long and wondering.

From these arcades, doors open into the anteroom of the great refectory, the little chapter hall, and into the corridor leading to the second cloisters, smaller refectory, and stair to the floor above. The walls of both anteroom and great refectory are hung with numerous framed pictures, but interest centers in the cenacolo-like fresco on the end wall, a picture by Sogliani of two angels bringing aprons full of food to St. Dominic and eleven of his brethren seated at a long table (in St. Sabina, Rome). At each end is a priest standing, presumably just entering by side doors. The whole picture is unusually symmetrical in its balanced figures, too much so, indeed, to be natural and pleasing, and although fresh in color and attractive in many ways, it is lacking, on the whole, in both strength and beauty. Above it on the same wall is a small Crucifixion with a hill-village in the background, painted by Fra Bartolommeo.

In the chapter hall is a single great fresco, the famous Crucifixion of Fra Angelico, covering all of one lunette-shaped wall. This often described and reproduced picture, with its marvelous Christ face, its numerous, vigorous figures of saints, and its curi-



ous painted framework with prophets and sibyls with scrolls in their hands, looking out of little window-like spaces, makes a lasting impression on every one who sees it. The quiet, isolated setting helps much to intensify and fix the impression, but the picture has in itself all of the sufficient elements of impressiveness: size, dramatic subject, religious feeling, human faces of much power. And it is all done in strong colors and simple design. The fresco was painted in the times of the first Medici.

On the right of the entrance into the second cloisters is the smaller refectory containing a cenacolo of Domenico Ghirlandajo's, in most of its details closely approaching that other Last Supper of the same artist in the cloisters of Ognissanti. The life-like cat gazing out at the spectator from near the feet of Judas is a new feature and there are, of course, slight changes throughout the picture, but the arrangement of the figures and the sub-tropical garden of the background, with its trees, fruits, and flying birds, is nearly the same in both frescoes. There is a fresh, open-air decorative feeling about the whole, which even the half light of the little room cannot destroy.

The second, or Old Cloisters, are filled now with an interesting collection of architectural bits of Old Florence. There are stone stemmi and escutcheons from the old palaces of the great families, bits of portals, cornices, and architraves; capitols, pedestals, and parts of pillars and pilasters, and in some of the adjoining cells fragments of mural decorations in colored pattern. Of special interest to any one who likes to read his way as he walks the streets with an





Photo, Brogi

THE ANNUNCIATION

Fra Angelico: San Marco



eye eagerly open to the palaces, towers, and portals of the city of the fourteenth, fifteenth, and sixteenth centuries, are the stemmi and escutcheons that reveal the former, if not the present, family ownership of these remainders of great days. In this San Marco collection one can make acquaintance with the stemmi of the Medici, the Strozzi, Sassetti, Ughi, Pilli, Corsini, Vecchietti, Anselmi, Brunelleschi, Tosinghi, and a score beside. And with those, too, of the great guilds; the Mercatanti with their eagle, the Regattieri with their lion and book, the Lana with their lamb and its halo and staff with attached pennant, the Medici and Speciali, the Giudici and Notari, the Oliandoli, the Cambii, and the rest. Students of design will find a fascination in the little rooms (III to VI) lined with the brilliantly colored pieces of mural decoration taken from old palaces and houses of wealthy merchants. In room III there is an interesting series of photographs of old streets, houses, and interiors made when the Ghetto and Mercato Vecchio were in course of destruction.

There is still left the best of all San Marco to see: the upper floor with its many little bare cells, each one a frame for its reverent, unique little picture; the prior's cell of Savonarola, with its few most intimate relics, where, more than anywhere else in Florence, the strange figure of the world-moving monk realizes itself; the cells of St. Antoninus with his vestments and portrait, and that special cell built by Cosimo dei Medici for his holy conversations with St. Antoninus and the painter monks Fra Angelico and Fra Benedetto.

## 180 Stray Pictures on Monastery Walls

It is to the little cells of the Fra Angelico pictures that San Marco's visitors rightly give most of their time and admiration. Here are the painted visions of an absolute belief, the outlines and colors seized from dreams and ecstasies that were more real than the rea-



"The prior's cell of Savonarola, with its few most intimate relics."

soned philosophies of all the schools. For Fra Angelico the holy personages of Bible story and holy myth "refined themselves, dematerialized themselves, volatilized themselves even to phantoms that radiate sweetness, purity, confident prayer, and celestial ecstasy." Fra Angelico believed with utter wholeness. Botticelli, Leonardo da Vinci, and the others had doubts; they had troubles with their intellect; their pictures are human. The joy and peace in Fra Angelico's pictures are more than human; the Christian idealism is the most sublime, the most nearly

perfect that has been pictured. But just because these experiences are not of this world there may come, with too much looking in the little cells, a certain tiredness, an exhaustion of the imagination. It is difficult to maintain the projection of our spirit into such an ethereal realm. But even so, we can still be ravished by the colors, the grace, the pure beauty of these jewels of pious genius.

On the loft floor of San Marco is also the library, a fine room with rows of painted missals and offices open in the cases down the center. It is this library that, next to his shade-haunted cell, brings up most vividly the memory of Savonarola. For here he and his appalled but steadfast companions awaited the very shattering of the whole monastery by the furious mob and soldiery without. Finally, it was agreed that Savonarola with two companions should be surrendered to the representatives of the Signoria on their assurance of safe-conduct to the Palazzo Vecchio. This was the end of the career of this extraordinary man of strength and error. His few remaining weeks of life were those of prison cell and torture chamber. The hanging and fire in the Piazza were but a merciful period to that protracted dying in the hands of his infuriated enemies in the Palazzo and Bargello.

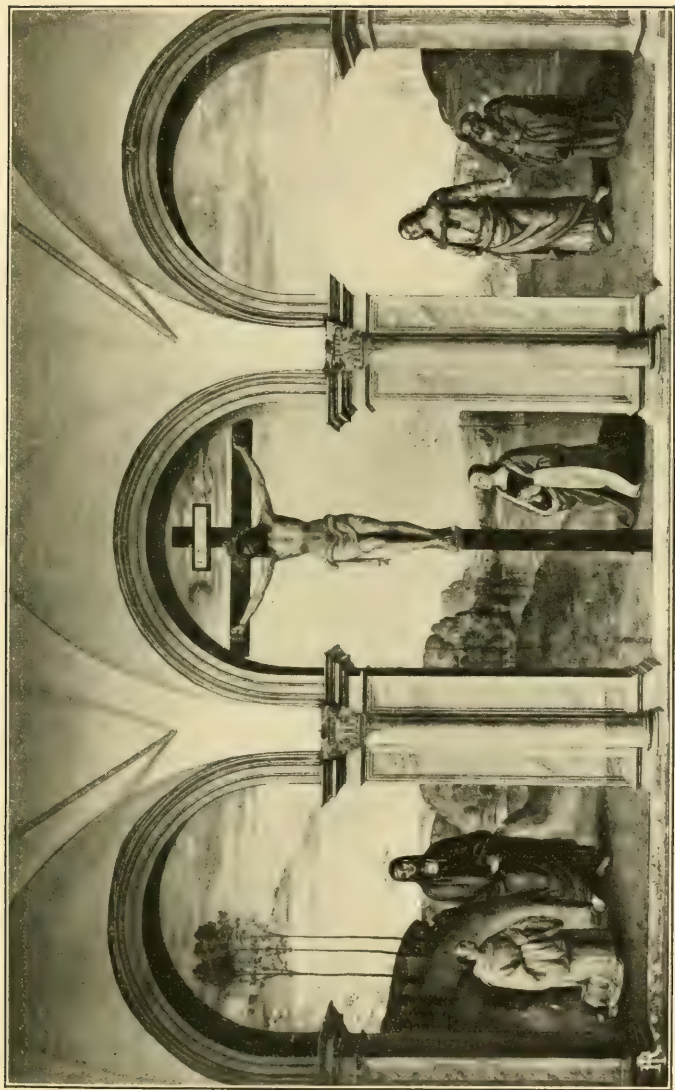
Of other stray pictures, besides the cenacoli and the frescoes of San Marco, perhaps Perugino's Crucifixion in the chapter house of the old monastery of Santa Maria Maddalena de' Pazzi (Via della Colonna) is the most notable. It is at least the most

attractive to many students. It is in nearly perfect condition, revealing all the characteristic smoothness and vividness of coloring of this master. As with the cenacoli we sit here also before a picture in its proper place, our attention not distracted by other things to see, nor by crowding sightseers, and our spirit open to the devotional significance and influence of the place; while the soft beauty of the picture and its great reverence give us a revelation of the unquestioning faith of the painter and the people of his time.

At No. 69 in the busy Via Cavour is an entrance to the old cloisters of a small order of friars, the Scalzi, where an extensive series of wall frescoes in *chiaroscuro* representing scenes from the life of John the Baptist may be seen. To lovers or students of the works of Andrea del Sarto this must prove an interesting group of pictures, as all of them with the exception of three are reputed to be the personal work of this artist. But to the sightseer of less personal interest in this curiously overpraised and overderided master they will not seem so attractive. Perhaps their failure to please lies in the lack of color, for the chief attraction of this artist to most picture-lovers lies exactly in his fascinating richness of coloring.

Finally, to close this incomplete record of stray pictures on monastery walls in Florence, I must make reference to that haunt of aromatic fragrance, that sublimated drug shop, unique in the world, the Spezeria (No. 14, Via della Scala) of Santa Maria Novella. Here in the little old sacristy, odorous





Photo, Brogi

THE CRUCIFIXION  
Perugino: S. Maria Maddalena dei Pazzi



now with a hundred perfumes, is a series of frescoes by Spinello Aretino that are well worth the visiting. They are as fragrant with color, freely restored though they may be, as the airs of the room are with essences. The pleasantest way to reward the druggist for your permission to wander at will in his rooms of color and odor is to buy from him a little package of orris root powder. There is no better in Florence.

## CHAPTER XIV

### THE SCULPTORS FROM THE HILL-SIDE QUARRIES

ON the precipitous eastern face of Monte Ceceri, that high hill over Fiesole, one sees many dark caverns, and going in and out of them, and threading narrow shelving paths and roads among them, many men and carts and horses and donkeys. These are the great quarries from which, age-long, the free-stone has come for the pillars and palaces of Florence. And as one drives or rides by tram to Fiesole or Maiano or Settignano, he sees by the roadway occasional rough sheds from which come the sounds of rock-chipping and about which are stone splinters and dust. In the caverns on the hill-side are the rough quarriers and hewers of stone; in the sheds are the skilled workmen, the dressers and carvers of free-stone and marble. And from these hill-side schools of lithologic industry and art have come those graduates, those exceptional few, whom we call the stone-carver sculptors or the sculptors from the hill-side quarries. Matriculating as humble stone-masons, they have graduated as skilled and endowed sculptors. Mino da Fiesole, Benedetto da Maiano, Desiderio da Settignano, and the brothers Rossellini from the



Photo. Alinari

TOMB MONUMENT OF CARLO MARZUPPINI  
Desiderio da Settignano: Santa Croce





same village, Benedetto da Rovezzano and a few others less distinguished, are the names that compose a special list of alumni of this primitive hill-side school of art.

Most of the other Tuscan sculptors of fame have had another sort of instruction and apprenticeship. They have come from the goldsmith shops of the city. And this difference in early instruction and character of the *ateliers* is revealed at once in the markedly differing manner of work and conception of the two groups of sculptors. The city pupils began from the first to work on the human face and figure; the quarry and stone-carver sculptors learned first architectural detail and decoration. And through all their work this familiarity with the forms of pillar and capital and pediment, and this facility in decorative treatment, stand out conspicuously. Tombs, tabernacles, and pulpits, with decorations and figures in relief, are their principal product. They have left only a few isolated statues and busts and heads. And all of them were architects as well as sculptors.

Of course, these men that I have named were much more than merely the exceptionally skilled ones among a host of quarrying and stone-cutting workmen. Each of these few is endowed with more or less of genius. Each was an artist born, as well as a stone-carver and sculptor trained from boyhood in an atmosphere of marble dust and industry. But there is no doubt that the conditions surrounding these practical stone-cutting shops were very favorable to the development and flowering of the germ of genius in any of the busy workers. It is because

Italian art so interpenetrated Italian life, says Edith Wharton, because the humblest stone-mason followed in some sort the lines of the great architects, and the modeler of village Madonnas the composition of the great sculptors, that so much came from such apparently prosaic and unpromising sources. And always among these hundreds of stone-masons and village sculptors there was the likelihood of the coming forth of the one or two that had in them the breath of genius. Desiderio and Mino, Benedetto and the Rossellini, were these one or two from the villages on the slopes above Florence. These villages nestling there in their olive orchards heard each day the bell call from Giotto's tower in that great city below them, a city ready and eager to welcome and provide for any sons of worth whom they might produce. Florence was fortunate, without doubt, to have such genius budding and expanding in the olive orchards of her surrounding hills; but so were these others fortunate in having a patron so quickly perceptive and generous.

It is in Florence especially that one sees the most, and for the most part the best, of the work of the decorative sculptors. The tombs of Santa Croce, Fiesole, San Miniato, and the Badia, the tabernacle in San Lorenzo, and the mutilated reliefs in the Bargello, are masterpieces that only Florence can boast. But here and there, all over Italy, from Naples to Lombardy, are works in their proper places, while in the museums of London, Berlin, and Paris are still others taken from their setting and put against walls or on pedestals in rows of artistic miscellany. But it

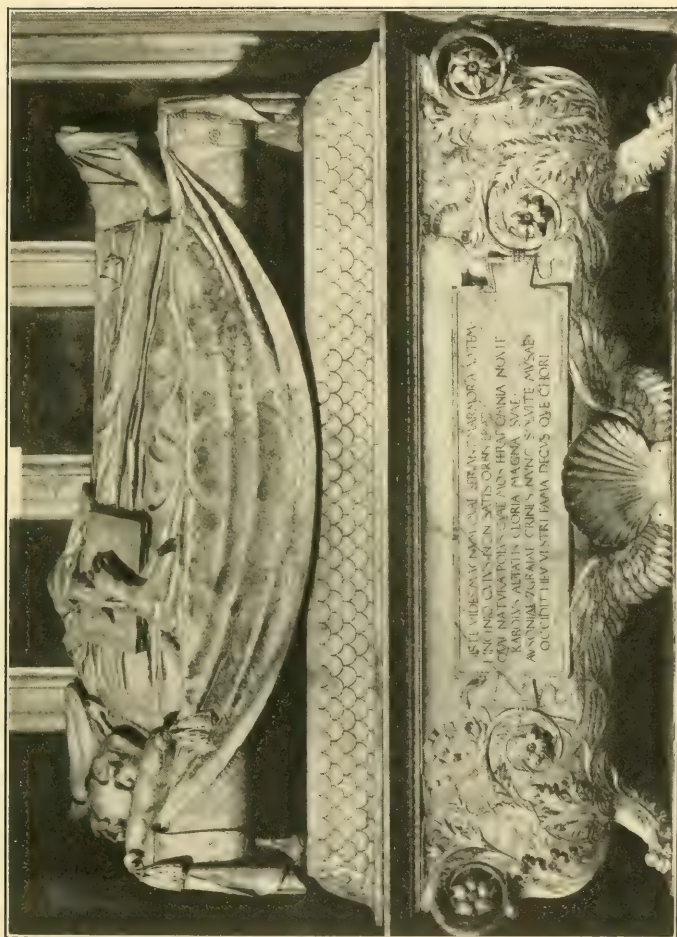


Photo. Alinari

DETAIL OF THE TOMB MONUMENT OF CARLO MARZUPPINI  
Desiderio da Settignano: Santa Croce



is in Florence that one gets most certainly and happily acquainted with these facile and exquisite carvers. I have not counted how many works of distinction they have scattered through her churches and public buildings, but there are more than two score, nearer three score, perhaps. One begins to realize their abundance only after beginning a little to look specially for them. Hardly one of the larger churches is without one or more of their tombs or ciboriums, and several of the smaller churches have pieces nearly as good. In the Palazzo Vecchio there is a carved doorway and the Bargello houses a dozen or more gathered together busts, tondos, and stray bits, besides those most precious relics of Benedetto da Rovezzano's masterpiece hacked to pieces outside the walls by the imperial soldiers in the siege of 1530.

But with all this abundance there is in no one place too many of them. They are many, but they are in many places. And the search for them and their discovery—that is, their discovery by one for oneself, for none probably remains undiscovered to the critics—is a delight that grows with its success. Their details and technique, their delicacy and joyous feeling, their delight in leaves and flowers and curling vine tendrils, the originality and sensitiveness of their composition and the beauty and strength of their faces and figures, reveal themselves ever more clearly and convincingly. As these men worked, they grew. From pillars and capitals and architraves, they went to flowers and fruits and leaves; from these to birds and small animals; from these to the human face and form. The

putti and angels, and the peaceful sleeping men on their sarcophagi, modeled in such full relief as to have all the effect, nearly, of isolated figures in the round, are the culmination of their work. From decorators and makers of architectural detail they became sculptors. Or rather, they became architects, decorators, and figure sculptors all in one.

I have not the presumption to judge the work of these men; neither to compare them among themselves nor with the other sculptors of their time. As to the latter matter one word will suffice: they are different. Donatello and Pisano and Verrocchio and the others used decoration, but they were certainly primarily modelers of the human figure. Desiderio, Mino, and Benedetto seem, despite all their achievements in modeling faces and bodies of cherubim and angels and recumbent men, primarily workers in architectural detail and ornamentation in marble cloths and hangings, leaves and flowers, shells and designs of dream fancy. They worked, too, almost exclusively in relief, while most of the others worked chiefly in the round.

As to their relative standing among themselves, expert opinion seems to rank Desiderio first in point of genius and execution. Benedetto da Maiano was most conspicuous perhaps as architect. Mino da Fiesole was most prolific and consistent. But they were all really much of a piece. If Desiderio's Marzuppini tomb in Santa Croce is finer than Bernardo Rossellini's Bruini tomb in the same church, Desiderio has no such great architectural group to his credit as has Rossellino in Faenza. If San





Photo. Alinari

DETAIL OF THE TOMB MONUMENT OF CARLO MARZUPPINI  
Desiderio da Settignano: Santa Croce



Miniato above Florence, to the east, is distinguished by Antonio Rossellino's masterpiece, the tomb of Cardinal James of Portugal, Fiesole's Duomo above Florence, to the west, is equally distinguished by Mino da Fiesole's tomb of Bishop Salutati. If the figure reliefs of Benedetto da Maiano on the pulpit in Santa Croce approach near to one's idea of perfect work of this kind, so also do those pitiful headless ones of Benedetto da Rovezzano in the Bargello. It is, indeed, truly hard to say who was the greater among them. And it is perhaps unnecessary to attempt to say it at all.

Desiderio da Settignano, born in 1428, was the son of the stone-cutter named Bartolommeo di Francesco, usually called Ferro, who lived in the little hill-side village which Desiderio did so much to make famous. He and a brother were brought up to the parental handicraft, Desiderio himself being made a member of the guild of *Maestri di Pietra* of Florence in 1453. He seems to have come under the eye of Donatello and to have received some instruction from him. In the Pazzi chapel in Santa Croce, the frieze of angel heads in medallion reliefs was executed by Donatello and Desiderio together. He grew to artistic manhood rapidly, for all of his work was done and his life finished by 1463.

Desiderio's bequests to the world of art were not many. To die at thirty-five, when one's undertakings are of the character of Desiderio's, necessarily means a short list of completed pieces. But in his list are, perhaps, the best examples for all time of the particular genre to which his work belongs. The tomb of

Cardinal Carlo Marzuppinì, secretary to Pope Eugenio IV, in the Church of Santa Croce, is unequalled as a combination of architectural composition, delicacy, and fancy of decoration and thoroughly sculptural treatment. It may well serve as a standard of measure and possibility of such kind of work. It is hard to overpraise any one artistic element in it, and equally hard to select any one detail for special consideration because of the risk of an apparent disparagement of others. My own eyes linger longest on the structure and decoration of the sarcophagus under the noble recumbent figure of the Cardinal. The head-like suggestion of the flowers in the spiral coils, the natural unnaturalness of the hairy feet issuing from the flanks of leaves and scrolls, and the beautiful bird-pinioned pecten are all pure outgrowths of the fancy of genius.

Across the city, in San Lorenzo, pretty effectively concealed behind a tawdry altar front in the north transept, is another exquisite exhibition of Desiderio's powers. It is a small tabernacle or altar piece with figures, joyous putti, a frieze of scrolls, fruits, and winged heads, and an architectural treatment involving perspective, all worked into a thoroughly harmonious whole. It was the Gesu Bambino above this altar, says Hare, that was carried through the streets of Florence by an army of children, who at the instigation of Savonarola called for every work of art of an immoral tendency that it might be destroyed and burned.

In the Badia is a charming relief of Desiderio's, and in Santa Trinità a wooden statue of the Mag-



Photo. Alinari

TOMB MONUMENT OF LEONARDO BRUINI  
Bernardo Rossellino: Santa Croce





dalen begun by him and finished by Benedetto da Maiano. The oratorio of Santa Trinità in Settignano claims a relief as his. It is in his style, but may be the work of a pupil. Finally, in the Bargello are several heads and busts attributed to Desiderio, but some perhaps wrongly. A competent amateur assures me strongly that the exquisite "head of a boy" in bronze in the Bargello cannot be Desiderio's. On the other hand, the Christ Child and St. John at the high altar in the little church of San Francesco (Via Palazzuolo) attributed to Donatello are more probably Desiderio's. There are also certain other scattered works in Florence attributed to Desiderio, but among them is nothing of special note.

Outside of Florence the artist is represented in Prato by the recumbent figure of the tomb of G. Inghirami in the cloisters of San Francesco, and in the museums of London, Berlin, and Paris by various pieces, mostly busts in marble and terra-cotta. The famous bust of Marietta Strozzi, long in the Strozzi palace, is now in the Louvre, where is also a bust of John the Baptist (attributed by some to Donatello). There are some interesting drawings by Desiderio in the Uffizi (rooms of the "collection of sketches by the great masters").

The Rossellini, Bernardo and Antonio, were the two unusual ones of five brothers all stone-workers and sculptors of Desiderio's village, Settignano. Bernardo (1409-1470) was the older of the two brothers, Antonio (1427-1479) perhaps the more gifted. But it is comparing excellence against excellence to attempt to determine the relative standing of

these two men. Bernardo's tomb of Leonardo Bruini in Santa Croce is in most ways the equal of Antonio's famous tomb of the Cardinal of Portugal in San Miniato. Of this latter Freeman says that if it does not equal Desiderio's work in composition and ornamental detail it, nevertheless, has an "emphasized appeal of a special quality. To the Christian no stronger symbol could be given of a spirit sealed in slumber to await its resurrection; and in showing impressively the dignity the human body may express when freed of all the accidental agitations of life, it suggests equally noble possibilities to be obtained by the human spirit in less troubled spheres."

Bernardo, as architect in the service of Pope Nicholas V, and later of Pius II, necessarily exercised much of his activity away from Florence. In particular, he gave much time to the construction of an elaborate group of buildings erected by Pius II at Faenza, his native town. In Pistoja, Empoli, and Arezzo, too, he has left considerable work, both architectural and sculptural. Antonio traveled much in Italy, scattering his gifts from the north to the extreme south. They can be found in Prato, Ferrara, Empoli, and Naples. Also, a generous measure of collected busts and reliefs exists in the museums of London and Berlin.

In Florence, Bernardo is represented by the Palazzo Rucellai, which he built after plans original with Alberti; by the Bruini tomb in Santa Croce; by the monument of Beata Villana in Santa Maria Novella, and by a number of reliefs, busts, and statuettes in the Bargello (11th and 12th rooms).



Photo. Alinari

ALTAR  
Mino da Fiesole: Sant' Ambrogio



Antonio has left to Florence the Cardinal of Portugal's tomb, in San Miniato; a beautiful Madonna and Child in *mandorla* (memorial to Francesco Nori) in the nave of Santa Croce; and several pieces in the Bargello, notably a fascinating relief tondo of the Madonna Adoring the Babe.

The Rossellini used fewer shells, leaves, flowers, fruits, and fancy scrolls in their stone tracery than the others. At the bottom of the Portuguese Cardinal's tomb, the decorations of the front of the base include a skull, snakes, two unicorns, and two sitting figures; while in the Bruini tomb the base front contains six putti and a medallion animal-head. The Portugal tomb is marred rather than helped by the imitation of drawn curtains, but its putti on the sarcophagus and its flying angels supporting the Madonna and Child medallion are pure delights.

The most prolific of the group, and the one who gives the most clean-cut impression of evenness and consistency in his work—in its weakness, as in its strength—is Mino da Fiesole, whose masterpiece, the tomb of the Bishop Salutati, with its unforgettable face, is in the old Romanesque Duomo of the historic village whose name the sculptor bears. Mino (1432-1486) was not born in Fiesole, however, but over the Vallombrosan hills, in the Casentino, probably in or near Poppi. He was an intimate friend of Desiderio, whom he excelled in rapidity of execution, but did not equal in originality and strength. Mino's many pieces show a certain sameness of type in conception and execution, which may be ascribed to true consistency and restraint, or which, more

likely, may be the result of his limitations. This sameness becomes almost monotonous and wearisome when many of his works are examined in close succession; but, on the other hand, it can be a source of pleasure when the pieces are seen at intervals. For there is to the beginner in the study of art always a certain satisfaction in recognizing in the various scattered works of an artist a common manner of execution or type of conception. Mino's works are of a peculiar sweetness and richness of tracery and ornament, and of a refined, if limited, sentiment. Freeman thinks him especially successful in the amalgamation of sculpture, preferably low relief work, with architectural elements. "He uses such a nicety of taste that the monument or altar so made is not sculpture, but has the true artistic unity of a poem or of a musical composition." But exactly this, it seems to me, can be said as truthfully of each of the men composing the group of hill-side sculptors. Indeed, this is precisely that characteristic which, common to them all, distinguishes them from their Tuscan confrères.

Mino's works in Florence are, besides the wonderful Salutati tomb and the beautiful altar-piece opposite it in the Duomo of Fiesole, the tombs of Bernardo Giugni and Ugo, Marquess of Tuscany, in the Badia; a ciborium in the Medici chapel at Santa Croce; the altar in the Cappella della Misericordia (or del Miracolo) in little San Ambrogio, in which church the artist is buried; a bust of Niccolò Strozzi in the Strozzi Palace; a bust of Niccolò Soderini in the house near the Piazza Santo Spirito,



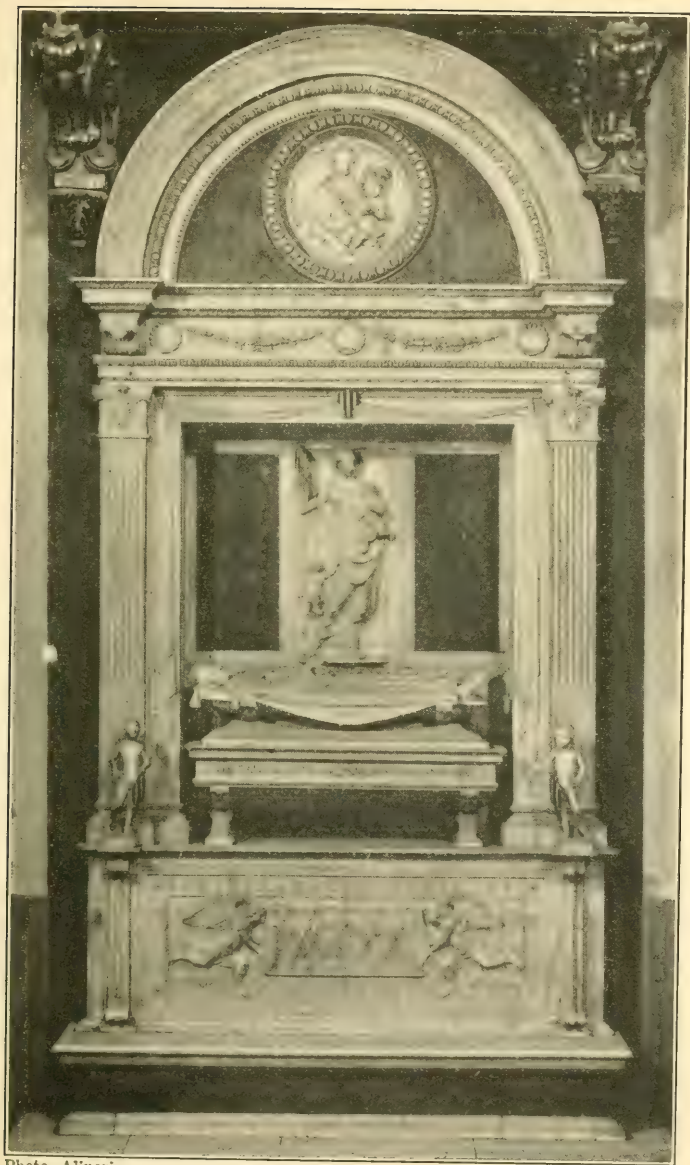


Photo. Alinari

TOMB MONUMENT OF UGO, MARCHESE DI TOSCANA  
Mino da Fiesole: Badia



once belonging to the Marchese della Stufa; a Madonna relief on the wall of the house in the Via Martelli, opposite Palazzo Martelli (No. 8); some small pieces in Palazzo Alessandri (No. 15, Via Margherita); and a number of reliefs and busts in the Bargello.

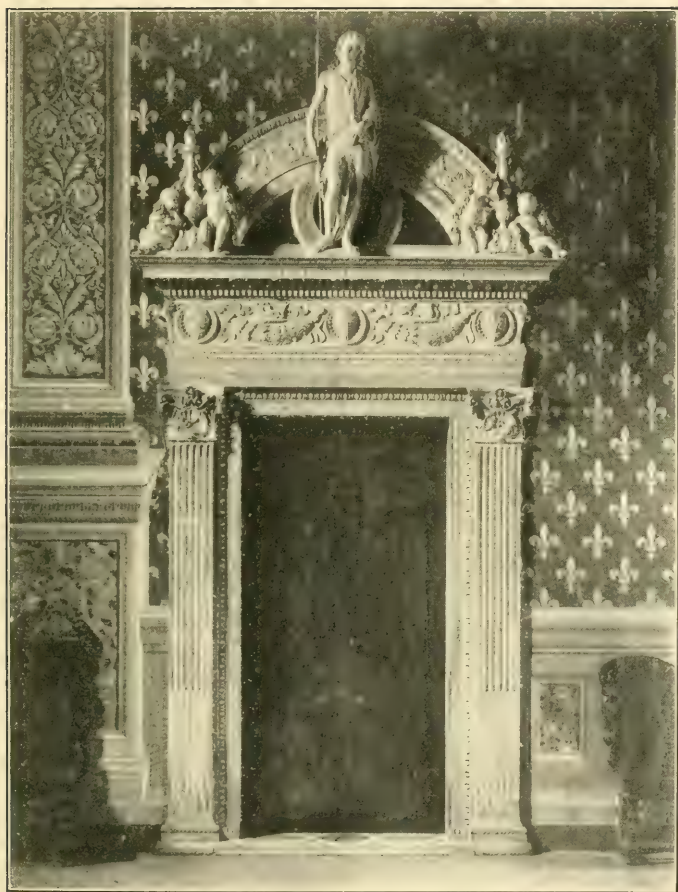
Among these last is one especially charming tondo of Madonna and Child, on gilded background. Mino worked also at Prato, Empoli, Perugia, Rome, and elsewhere, and examples of his art are to be found in all these places. The Louvre has an exquisite little head of the boy St. John, and Berlin has a bust of Niccolò Strozzi, as well as other pieces.

Almost midway between Settignano and Fiesole, although lower on the hillslope than either, is the stonecutter's village of Maiano. Here lived the stoneworker, Antonio da Maiano, with his three sons, all of whom came to be sculptors and architects. Of the three, Benedetto reached greatest fame. He gave himself first chiefly to work in wooden mosaic, and, disappointed in not finding appreciation and opportunity for this work in Florence, he went to Hungary, carrying with him two elaborate intarsia chests as gift to King Matthias Corvinus, in whom he hoped to find a patron. Arrived in Hungary, he found his precious pieces broken, and thereupon resolved to give up working with such flimsy material and to devote himself henceforth to sculpture. So he returned to Florence and soon found opportunity for all his time and capacity. Among his earliest works was the marble doorway in the Palazzo Vecchio, between the Sala dell' Orologio and

the Sala dell' Udienza. The admirable proportions and the singing decorations of this door insistently invite one to pass under its lintel. Its delicate ornamentation, with the putti and St. John overhead, make it one of the most delightful of all the less elaborate pieces of the hill-side sculptors. The beautiful carved wooden ceiling in the Hall of the Eight in the same building is also a work—the design, at least—of Benedetto.

Elsewhere in Florence there are numerous examples of this woodworker, sculptor, and architect. In the Duomo there is a rather curious framed bust of Giotto, a bust of Antonio Squarcialupo, the organist-composer, and a wooden crucifix over the great altar; in the Badia, an altar with reliefs; in Santa Maria Novella, the tomb of Filippo Strozzi; in the Oratorio della Misericordia, a San Sebastian; in Santa Croce, the very fine pulpit, called by some critics the artist's masterpiece; while in the Bargello are several busts and statuettes. And finally, the great Palazzo Strozzi, or rather its lower floors—for the enormous, slowly-building structure was incomplete at Benedetto's death. It was continued under the direction of Il Cronaca, who is responsible for the (incomplete) striking Corinthian cornice. Inside the palace was for long a bust by Benedetto of Filippo Strozzi, the elder, which is now in the Louvre at Paris.

After his return from Hungary, the artist by no means remained all the time in Florence. He worked in Naples a while, in Faenza, and Arezzo, and in Prato, both as architect and sculptor, and



Photo, Alinari

DOOR OF THE SALA DELL' OROLOGIA  
Benedetto da Maiano: Palazzo Vecchio





in the later years of his life he made the shrine of San Bartolo for the church of San Agostino at San Gimignano.

Finally, we come to another Benedetto—one born in the later part of the fifteenth century, at Rovezzano on the Arno, in the outskirts of Florence, and hence in the custom of the time called Benedetto da Rovezzano. He was the only one of the stone sculptors to carry his activity over into the sixteenth century. Benedetto da Rovezzano, to his and our great cost, was working on his masterpiece in those most terrible days of Florence, when, besieged from without by the armies of Pope and Emperor, and betrayed from within by her own war-chiefs, the star of the wonderful city seemed lowest. This master work of the artist was an elaborately carved shrine for the tomb of Gualberto, founder of Vallombrosa. For ten years, Benedetto had wrought at the wealth of ornament. There were hosts of small figures in very high relief, surrounded by flat decoration and tracery. In the monastery of San Salvi, where this wonderwork had been set up, troops were quartered, and these men of action, impatient of the enforced idleness of the besieging days, put themselves to the enlivening game of knocking off the heads of Benedetto's little stone figures. And so we have to-day for souvenir of the artist's long travail and the relieving incidents of war's stress, the pitiful fragments housed and guarded like priceless jewels in the Bargello. They are worth the care.

In the Bargello, also, is the chimney-piece taken from the Casa Borgherini. Here is well shown

Benedetto's characteristic method of cutting his figures in such deep relief as to give them all the effect of round figures, while keeping his tracery and decoration in very low relief. The classic restraint of the architectural treatment, coupled with the romantic grace and wealth of the decoration, make this chimney-piece a rarely noble and charming work. This same combination of classicism, enriched by a wealth of delicate ornamentation, is shown in the Edicola also in the Bargello. Another of Benedetto's fine works is the door of the church of the Badia, with its rich but restrained decoration. In the historic small church of Santi Apostoli is the tomb of Oddo Altoviti, in a style rather different from the rest of his work, while in the church of Santa Trinità, in a chapel on the right of the nave, is a beautiful altar presenting an unusual intricacy and richness of fancy in its decorative carving. Other of the artist's works in Florence are the tomb of Picro Soderini, in the choir of the church of the Carmine; a St. John in the Duomo; a St. Michael in the portico of the church of San Salvi, and a relief of the Virgin and Child in the angle wall of Palazzo Borgherini (No. 15, Borgo SS. Apostoli). Benedetto was the architect of the palace of the Altoviti, near the church of Santi Apostoli.

This chapter pretends to no critical "treatment" of these men whom I have called the "hill-side sculptors." It only tries to attract the special attention of the visitor in Florence to them. To one a little surfeited with the long lines of pictures in the great galleries, a little weary of eye-straining

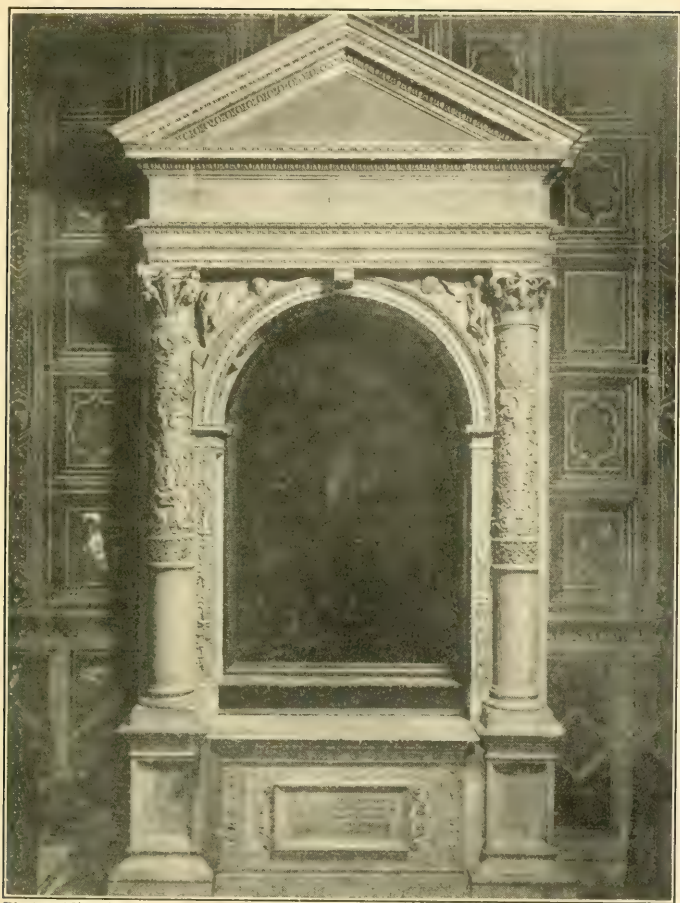


Photo. Alinari

ALTAR  
Benedetto da Rovizzano: Santa Trinità



inspection of frescoes in dim chapels, a quest of the solidly but delicately stone-bound fancies of the decorative sculptors may be a happy recreation. They are abundant, but not massed; scattered, but not far to seek. There are tombs and doorways, altars and chimney-pieces, with their combination of reverence and bubbling pagan fancy; sleeping human figures, joyous cherubim, and grotesque masks, with their singing suggestions of nature, and their ingenious development of symmetrical scroll and line, all fixed in translucent-surfaced marble and framed and bound together in architectural harmony.

## CHAPTER XV

### OUTSIDE THE WALLS

#### FEUDAL CASTLES AND FIESOLE

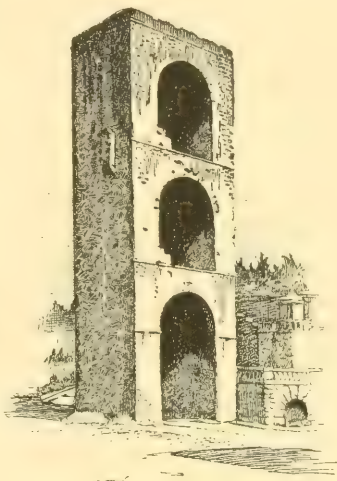
FLORENCE is no Nuremberg or Lucca. Its walls have long ago disappeared. Not entirely, to be sure; there is a fine old stretch that one sees from San Miniato, slanting up the hill toward Fortezza San Giorgio. And there are a few noble gate towers of the ancient days still standing. But the swift tram cars of the *circumvallazione*, and the peering officers of the city customs at the *barriere* who look suspiciously at your bundles, and charge you a few pennies if you happen to be bringing a chicken to town; these are the present circling guards of the city.

It would probably be better to say beyond the *barriere*, instead of outside the walls, to indicate the scope of this chapter, which is to tell a little of some of the things that are contiguous, but external to the city proper. The *dintorni* of Florence occupy two full volumes of close printing, under the well-informed hand of Guido Carocci, who takes you in his company along every roadway leading outward from each one of the city barriers. And if one have the time, and the Italian, and fancies strolling the



country ways in search of villas and old chapels, fading frescoes in crumbling shrines, and spots where men of history and saints of holy myth have stood, he can put in many a day of good seeing with Carrocci for guide. And incidentally, and unavoidably, will he see some of that fascinating beauty of the fields and gardens, hill-slopes and scenes from hilltops, that I have tried many times in this book to hint of. Florence and its surroundings of to-day have a special charm of their own quite apart from that given them by their association with vanished poets and artists, princes and priests.

I had looked often and longingly to the north and up toward the two stone, fortress-like buildings that one sees on their hill perches so distinctly from the Fiesole and Settignano trams. And their fine-sounding names, Vincigliata and Castel di Poggio, kept echoing in my ears like a reminiscence of things already known. Were they castles on the Rhine or Moselle that I had sailed by regretfully summers ago, or were they the Wartburg or some other more broken and deserted stronghold that I had seen while



San Niccolò, one of the "few noble gate towers of ancient days."

tramping the Thuringian hills? Anyway, they were strongly reminiscent of earlier joys, and promised new thrills like old ones, which is always a promise of much seduction.

From the piazza in front of the little church of Settignano a pair of iron gates open to the north on a broad path that drops down into the garden-



"Up the hill toward Vincigliata."

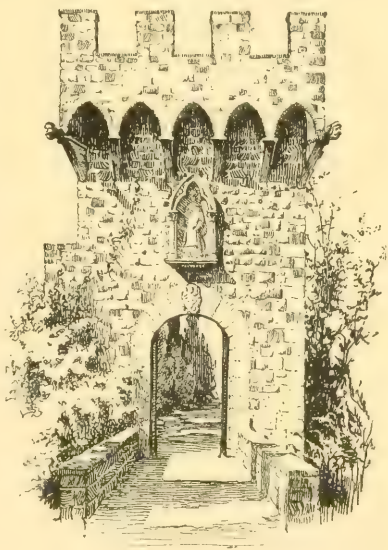
like narrow valley of a very small stream. Crossing this and skirting the little cemetery you begin to push up the hill toward Vincigliata, through a straggling plantation of young cypresses. What sad harm was worked to all the hills about Florence by the reckless cutting of the trees in past times! Modern forestry all over Europe is endeavoring to repair these old hurts, but it is a

slow process, the reforestation of denuded hill-sides, long worked and worn by rain and wind. The ounce of prevention would have been so much better.

Higher up the forest is closer and older, and the way more beautiful. The road curves gently around the hill-slope past a farm-house or two, and past a little chapel set under a group of dark old cypresses, and then swings sharply around the head of a ravine, with its sides thickly set with olives and vines, and arrives under the great retaining walls of Vincigliata; good tramping and good seeing all the way.

Vincigliata, solid, splendid as it is, is a disappointment. It is too much a restoration; it is a Château de Pierrefonds.

There still remain scattered parts of its old self, and its interior is nobly redone, presumably most faithfully, and filled with interesting things. But there is little of the musty flavor of the ancient Visdomini or Usimbardi, successive robber lords of the castle. That able English adventurer, John Hawkwood, who rides his



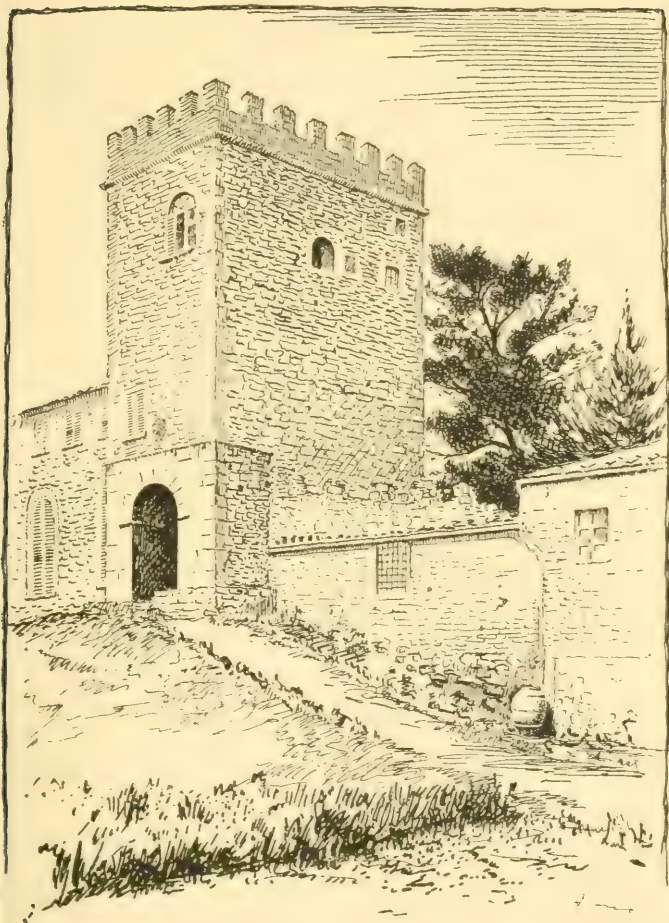
The gate tower of Vincigliata.

great horse on the entrance wall of the Duomo, is reputed to be responsible for the demolishing of Vincigliata, some time about 1350. Since then it

has undergone for six centuries the vicissitudes of intermittent rebuilding and restoration, although it remained continually in the ownership of one family, that of the Alessandri, for five of these centuries.

Leaving Vincigliata, the road pushes on up the narrow hill shoulder toward Castel di Poggio, past the little church of Santa Maria a Vincigliata, and through a tangle of woods, until it tops the eminence, which is really of no mean height. Vincigliata is well below, while across a great deep natural amphitheater Monte Ceceri lifts its much-hewn face.

Castel di Poggio is much more satisfactory to the searcher for musty flavor. It seems almost deserted, great trees grow struggling in its court, and ancient vines wander up its rough walls. The tower still stands in its full height and strength, and parts of the old outer walls show how mighty and secure a stronghold it was in the days of the Del Manzecca. These Del Manzecca seem to have been a wholly competent and picturesque family of medieval highwaymen; and from their impregnable castle on the hill-top they harried the country for miles about, even to the very skirts of Florence. It was probably their over-boldness in this direction that led the Florence Signoria, about the middle of the fourteenth century, to engage the valorous Hawkwood and his famous White Company to come over from Pisa and teach the Del Manzecca a needed lesson. Indeed, that whole line of fortress castles, inhabited by prideful, gentlemanly assassins of the road, beginning with Palagio al Poggio and going on with Vincigliata and Castel di Poggio, and ending in



"The tower of Castel di Poggio still stands in its full height and strength."

Torre dei Gandi, seems to have been captured, sacked, and partially razed by this all-conquering English mercenary.



Mrs. Janet Ross, the present owner and inhabitant of the old Palagio al Poggio, now known as Poggio Gherardo, and celebrated as the probable first stopping-place of Boccaccio's story-telling group of ladies and gentlemen, tells in her interesting sketch of "a stroll in Boccaccio's country," a story of Vincigliata and Castel di Poggio that is good reading.

Giovanni Usimbardi (owner of Vincigliata), a friend of Dante, Cavalcanti, and other illustrious Florentines, had a daughter named Selvaggia, with whom the two sons of Del Manzecca (owner of Castel di Poggio, a short mile away) fell in love. Simone, the elder, asked her hand in marriage and was refused, so he stabbed her father, but fortunately only wounded him. The second son, Uberto, met the maiden at Mass in the church of Santa Maria a Vincigliata, and by his beauty and gracious presence won her heart. Twice the life of Giovanni Usimbardi was saved in a battle by an unknown knight with a small knot of blue ribbon tied to his breastplate. The second time, the stranger was felled to the ground, and on his helmet being removed, Usimbardi recognized Uberto del Manzecca, the son of his hated neighbor. The long-standing feud was made up, and the wedding-day was fixed.

"As Selvaggia stood at her casement, in bridal array, watching the lithe figure on the good black horse, which knew the road so well down from Castel di Poggio to Vincigliata, she saw three men dash out of the wood. One seized the horse's bridle, the



other pulled his rider out of the saddle, and before the young knight could draw his sword, the third plunged a dagger into his heart. The murderer was Simone, Uberto's eldest brother.

"The bridal bells tolled a death-knell, and Selvaggia sat with her lover's head in her lap until they



Castel di Poggio.

took the body away for burial. She went raving mad, and died sitting at her window looking at Castel di Poggio. And the peasants say that her ghost haunted the ruins of the old castle—her long fair hair floating behind her, and her white satin dress stained with blood."

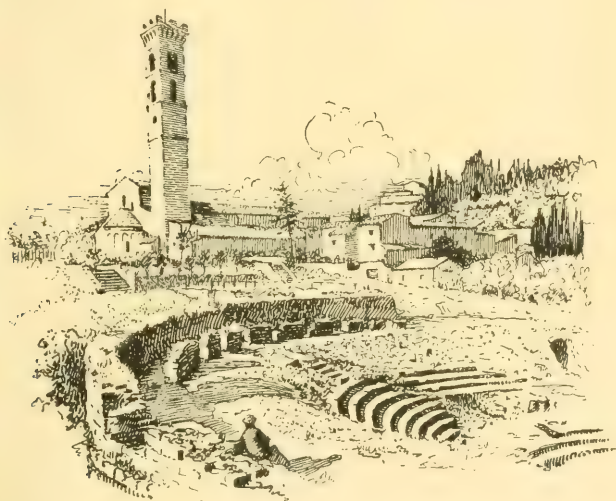
From Castel di Poggio a smooth road runs along the hill-crest, south and west, the valley of the Mugello and village of Ontignano on the right. The road curves ever more to the south and comes finally through Borg' Unto into Fiesole from behind, that is, from the side away from Florence. To the left of this road from Castel di Poggio to Fiesole is

always the mass of Monte Ceceri, with its west and south faces sloping and built on, but abrupt and precipitous and all hewn into and cut away on its eastern face. Indeed, the abruptness of this face is largely due to the extraordinary cutting and quarrying that has gone on here for centuries. For from these quarries, or "Caves of Fiesole," as they are called, has come the *pietra serena* that Cellini describes in his "Treatise on Sculpture," the blue-gray freestone in great blocks and columns that has gone into the making of most of the Florentine palaces. Some forty of these caves are now being worked. The most famous old one is that called the "Cave of the Columns," from which the columns of the Uffizi arcades came. The quarries are an interesting sight, with their scores of red-sashed laborers and sleepy, sometimes actually sleeping, drivers of the heavy two-wheeled carts, a-stretch in the sun on the slowly moving loads of stone.

The view from the summit of Monte Ceceri is well worth the little exertion of the climb. A great stretch of Val d'Arno, all the villas and gardens of the Fiesolean slope, together with Florence, are under one's feet, while to the west and north lift the distant summits of great mountains; altogether a prospect of unusual variety and beauty.

Fiesole itself, with its authentic tradition of Etruscan and Roman inhabitancy, and its proud memory of days when it stood before Florence in importance, occupies a curious position in a sort of high pass in the hill-crest, a position which made it in ancient times a guard of the way from the wild

country of the north. The native Fiesoleans are a virile and plain-spoken people, but the sophisticating influence of many years of tourist inhabitancy is apparent in the town. Its principal "sights" are the old cathedral, with its bishop's palace; a pretorial building on the large, exposed piazza; a



The Duomo of Fiesole and ruins of Roman amphitheater.

few ruins of Etruscan fortifications and Roman theater and forum; a large Franciscan convent topping the crest to the south; and finally, its many villas of beauty and historic association. The views from Fiesole, too, of Florence and Arno valley are famous. All these attractions make it the most visited spot in the Florence environs.

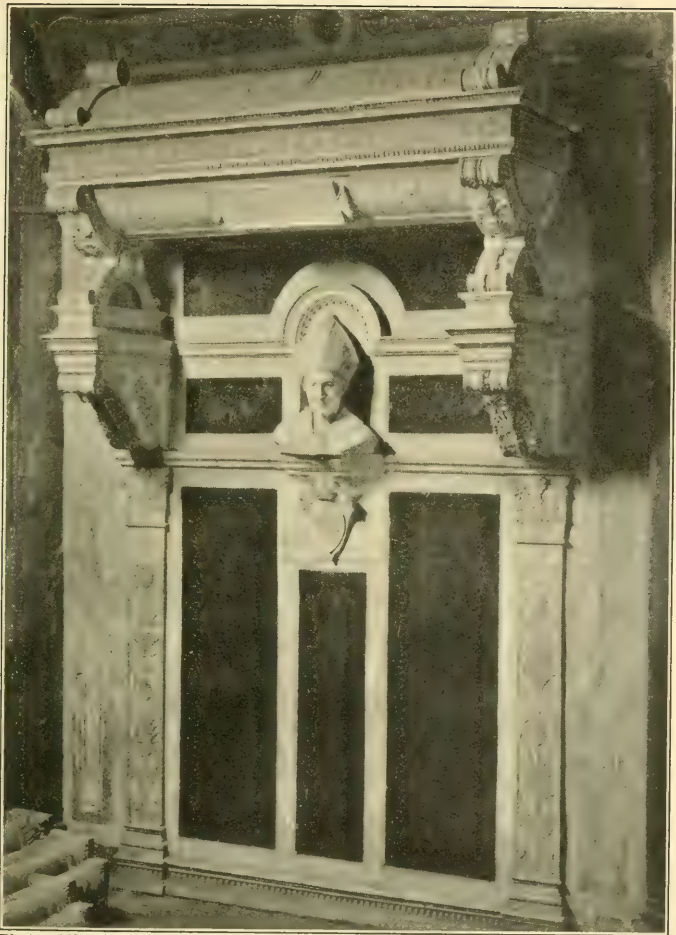
The cathedral, dating from the beginning of the eleventh century, is one of the two strictly Roman-

esque churches that visitors to Florence can see. The other is San Miniato; and thus both are outside the walls. The church at Fiesole is less beautiful than that of San Miniato, but as it is in full use as a church while San Miniato is not, it can offer a more distinct impression of the fitness of the curious type of interior construction of these churches for religious service. The elevation of the choir and its chapels considerably above the level of the nave, and the open exposure of the low-ceilinged crypt underneath the choir, are features common to both churches. We heard a full musical Mass in the church at Fiesole on the festa of San Francisco, and the singing and reading from the elevated choir were very impressive.

There are few monuments in the church, but one of these, the tomb of Bishop Leonardo Salutati, the famous masterpiece of Mino da Fiesole, done in 1462, together with the beautiful altar-piece opposite it by the same sculptor, are worth a whole row of the modern monuments in Italy's Westminster (Santa Croce). The tower of the cathedral, slender and crenelated, is a conspicuous object from Florence.

Below Fiesole, on the way to Florence, is San Domenico di Fiesole, with its Dominican convent of 1405, where Fra Angelico lived. He painted many of its walls with frescoes, mostly since removed or destroyed. Indeed, only two now remain. The most famous one taken away is the Coronation of the Virgin, in the Louvre.

Near San Domenico is the ancient Badia, the



Photo, Alinari

**TOMB MONUMENT OF BISHOP LEONARDO SALUTATI**  
Mino da Fiesole: Duomo of Fiesole





primitive church of Fiesole, erected, as was the custom of the times, outside the fortified walls. It fell into ruin after the cathedral was built, but in the fifteenth century was rebuilt by Brunelleschi and Michelozzo at the command and expense of Cosimo dei Medici. Here in 1452 that Giovanni dei Medici, who afterward became Pope Leo X, was invested with his cardinal's robes. The Badia seems to have been a sort of headquarters for the literary and artistic activity of the Medici and their more immediate entourage. Lorenzo the Magnificent, and his precious group of Platonic philosophers and poets, were often here, and Cosimo had already collected in the Badia a splendid library of codices and rare works. These were transferred in 1783 to found the Laurenziana in Florence.

The villas of the southern and eastern Fiesolean slopes are many and famous. From the terrace below the Franciscan convent you look directly down upon the roof of the one that Giovanni dei Medici had Michelozzo build for him, and which was later the preferred residence of Lorenzo the Magnificent. If the memories of those days, when Politian, Pico della Mirandola, Cavalcanti il Verino, and the others, burned their incense here to Plato and wrote their verses and apostrophes to his philosophy, are dim, we can at least appreciate to the full the wonderful beauty of the setting of this Medicean abode. Adjoining the villa, and of equal beauty of position and scene, is a present convent of the "Blue Nuns," with a splendid irregular grove of tall cypresses in the garden, that drops swiftly

down the hill. That other even more famous Medicean villa, Careggi, where Cosimo the Elder died in 1464, and after him, in the year in which Columbus was discovering America, his son Lorenzo, with or without the blessing of Savonarola—will that ever be decided?—can just be seen peeping from the not far distant hill-side to the south. At Careggi was held each year in November the banquet instituted by Lorenzo and his group of Platophiles to celebrate the birthday of Plato. From this same viewpoint, too, Villa Palmieri, famous as one of the halting-places of Boccaccio's story-telling group, lifts its head from the left bank of the Mugnone. Indeed, from this point one can see pretty nearly all the villas of famous name that cluster on the Fiesolean slopes.

Like most of the other historic villas near Fiesole, the Medicean "Il Palagio" has been often renamed with the changings of ownership. It has been Villa Mozzi, Villa Spence, and is at present called Villa Macalmont. The Germanization and Anglicization of Fiesole and its villas is nearly complete now; not many names have yet to be changed to make it entirely so. Medici, Pandolfini, Albizzi, Strozzi, Valori, and the others, are replaced by unfamiliar and un-Italian names, associated more with successful business conquest or fortunate inheritance than with the annals of Florentine history or art. Still, some of these newer names have their thrill of interest, albeit derived from an association of more modern times. Villa Landor, Villa Böcklin, and others hardly less familiar, maintain the tradition of literary



Photo. Alinari

ALTAR WITH VIRGIN AND SAINTS IN ADORATION  
Mino da Fiesole: Duomo of Fiesole



and artistic distinction, which has ever been peculiarly associated with the Florentine villas. In truth, if one should enumerate to-day the names of all the villa inhabitants of the environs of Florence, the number among them familiar to us would be surprisingly large. And especially so if in this list should be included all the inhabitants of the past century. Laurence Hutton, in his "Literary Landmarks of Florence," lists nearly a hundred well-known names which attach to such landmarks in and about the city.

Winding down among the many villas and their luxuriant gardens, a half-dozen various roads find their way from the upper slopes to the plain below. That one that leads most interestingly, perhaps, drops down by the towered, castle-like villa of Temple Leader, the restorer of Vincigliata, goes on by Covoni, Villa Machiavelli, and "La Primola," on the hill shoulder of Maiano, then runs behind historic battlemented Poggio Gherardo, and finally joins, on the valley floor, the Via Settignanese, with its noisy but convenient tram. Here one may take car either to Florence or to Settignano, as his temporary house-roof calls.

But before making this rather trivial ending of so good and full a tramping trip, there is, hard by the roadway, just one more invitation to linger. A gray and worn little church and attached monastery, San Martino a Maiano, stands but a few rods away up the hill and calls to the searcher for musty flavor with the insistent voice of nearly ten centuries. There is, to be sure, little, probably, of the old

eleventh century structure left, but the record seems clear of a continuous persistence of the church here for a thousand years.

With this last halting our ramble over the Settignanoese and Fiesolean hills may come to an end. This ramble could have been as well a drive, for the castles, Fiesole, and the villas are all connected by good and smooth, if somewhat up and down hill, roadways. Any Florentine cabman will undertake the trip for ten or twelve lire. But the going on foot makes the *podere* paths free to you, and the intimate acquaintance with that continuous garden that the Tuscans make of their sunny hill-sides may come to be one of the longest cherished memories of Florence. It is one of mine: so I am glad I walked.



## CHAPTER XVI

### OUTSIDE THE WALLS (CONTINUED)

#### SAN MINIATO, ARCETRI, CERTOSA, IMPRUNETA, SIGNA, AND MALMANTILE

**O**PPPOSITE Fiesole, on the other side of Florence and the Arno, are San Miniato and the vine-clad hill of Arcetri. With less fatigue than by climbing on foot up the turning road above the old stone gate-tower of San Niccolò, and yet quite as quickly and considerably cheaper than by carriage, one can reach Monte San Miniato and Arcetri by tram—the Viale dei Colli tram, from the Piazza del Duomo. Monte San Miniato turns out to be rather less a mountain on close acquaintance than its name would suggest, and for many reasons the tramping way is the best way of all to come to its beauties. Starting from the Porta Romana, at the beginning of the “road to Rome,” the pedestrian resists for this time, at least, the seizing desire actually to take the old road for the Imperial City and chooses rather the very modern Viale Machiavelli (left) that runs uphill to Villa Poggio Imperiale. This historical property belonged, under the name of Poggio Baroncelli, to one Pietro Salviati, a bitter opposer of the Medici. Later, on the banishment of Salviati, it

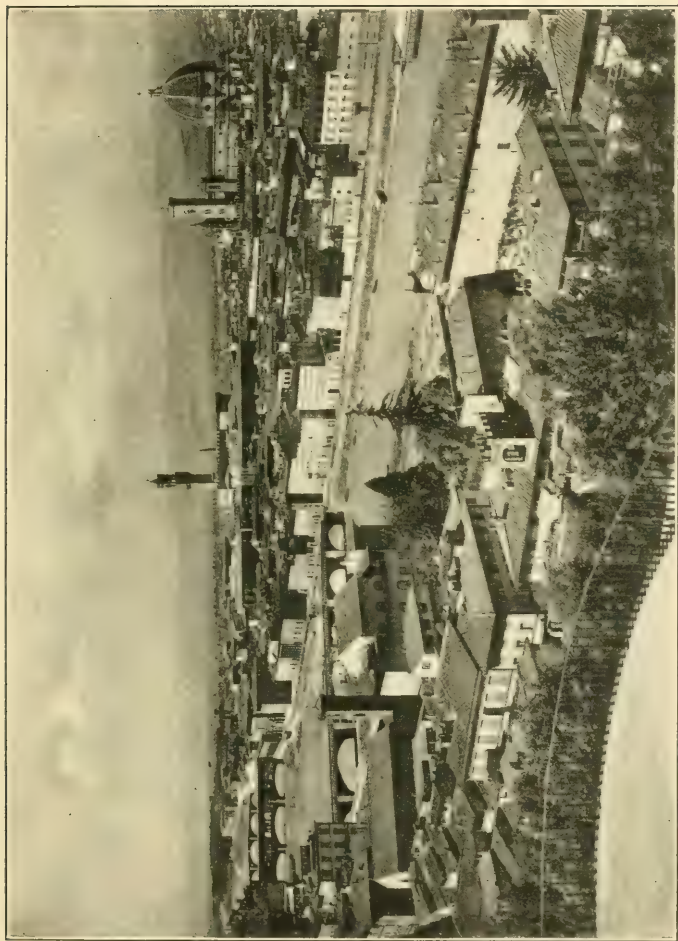
came into the hands of his enemies, and was rebuilt and extended by them, especially by Cosimo II for his Austrian wife, the Grand-duchess Maria Madalena. In one of the rooms Isabella Orsini (daughter of Cosimo I) was strangled by her wronged husband, and in front of the villa occurred



"Starting from the Porta Romana at the beginning of the road to Rome."

a famous duel between Ludovico Martelli and Dante da Castiglione on one side, and Giovanni Bandini and Bertino Aldobrandi on the other—a fiery quartette of scions of Florence's noblest families. This lively old villa is now sufficiently commonplace as a government conservatory for young women.

Lined by a continuous series of expensive modern villas and elaborate gardens, the Viale Machiavelli



Photo, Brogi

FLORENCE FROM THE VIALE DEI COLLI



comes in time to the circular Piazzale Galileo, from which it issues as the Viale Galileo and continues its shaded curving way toward San Miniato and the Piazzale Michelangelo. Thence, as the Viale Michelangelo, it drops in a long curve down to the Arno. The whole way is called the Viale dei Colli, and is partly traversed by the tram. Its elevated position and winding course along the verge of the long hill (Arcetri), lifted directly above the Arno and Florence, give it command of a most complete and beautiful view of the city and valley, with the high hills of Fiesole and the Monte Morello chain for background. It is undoubtedly one of the most notable walks or drives in all Europe. From it Florence and its Duomo and Campanile make an imperishable picture in the mind of the most driven tourist.

The two special points of interest which this road serves to reach are San Miniato, with its basilica, burying-ground, and piazza, and the villa and tower connected with the later life and work and the death of Galileo. The tower, Torre del Gallo, from which the astronomer is supposed to have carried on his questionings of the stars, has been so heightened and changed by the present owner, who has converted it into a museum of miscellany, that it loses much of its sentiment as the veritable working-place, if indeed it ever truly was this, of the famous persecuted astronomer. Much has been written in prose and poetry about the nights spent by Galileo in this observatory tower, and of the particular discoveries made here. But of authentic

facts regarding them, strangely little is available to the dry and dusty guide-book maker. That Galileo lived and died on the hill-side, and that he was visited by Milton, certainly once, probably twice, is true; and that he devoted his working hours to observation, calculation, and speculation must also be true. But the zealous efforts of the local chroniclers of Pisa, Signa, Florence, and elsewhere, to determine the exact spots of each of his particular discoveries, are to be regarded as more interesting than informing.

Galileo died at 23, Via del Piano di Giullari, in the so-called Villa Galileo, near the tower, and it was here that Milton visited him in 1638, and probably again in 1639. Earlier, Galileo lived for some years at 13, Costa San Giorgio, much lower down on the hill-side, near the river.

The Piazzale Michelangelo, constructed under the designs of Professor Giuseppe Poggi (the whole picturesque Viale dei Colli is also his successful project), is a very happily devised point of seeing and of rest on this long tramp. Its view of Florence, the Arno valley, and the bounding hills and distant mountains well deserves its world fame. And the erection here, out of doors and well lifted above the spectator, of a bronze replica of Michelangelo's great David is a most commendable act of justice to the sculptor. Here is where David belongs, if he cannot hold his original place on the platform of the Palazzo Vecchio. And perhaps the shade of Michelangelo is happier with the original David away from its galling "rival" by Bandinelli and



its beautiful replica, here alone, admired by the world and finally dominant over the city at its feet.

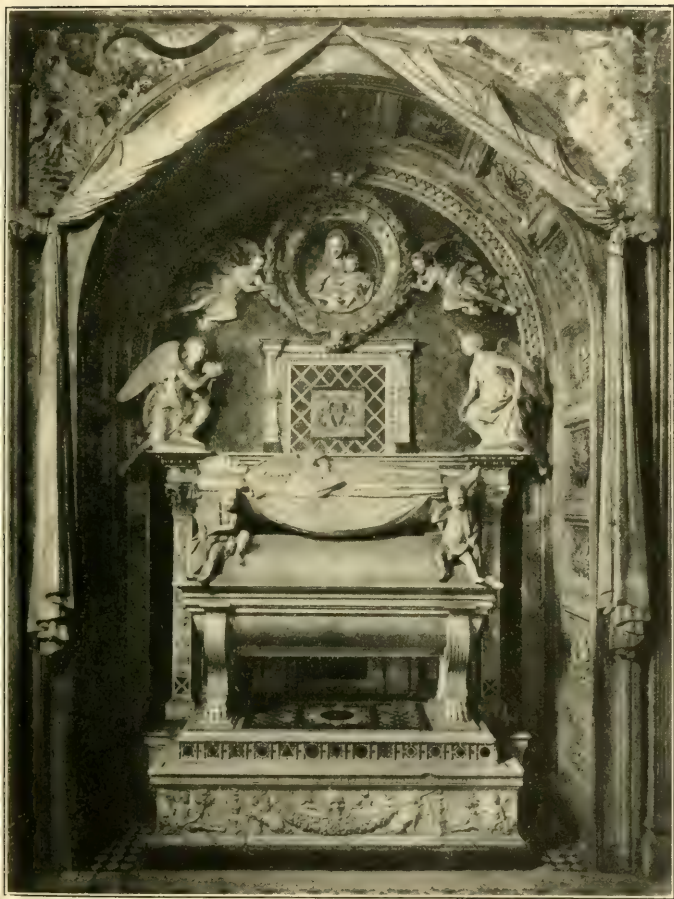
Around the David are replicas of the famous Day and Night, Twilight and Dawn of the Medici chapel, and only a stone's throw or more away are the relics of those fortifications that grew like a mushroom under Michelangelo's driving energy in those terrible days of 1530. Besieged by Emperor and Pope, harassed internally by dissensions between government and nobles, misserved by a tricking commander, Florence revealed herself a city of amazing resource in that struggle. And not the least of her resource was manifest in this turning of her greatest artist genius into a builder of fortifications and leader of fighting men.

Above the piazza rise the two churches of the San Miniato hill, first, the old cypress-surrounded San Salvatore al Monte, with its large Franciscan monastery, the church called by Michelangelo, on account of its simple beauty of form and position, "*la sua bella villanelle*" (his beautiful country girl); and above it, entered through an old gate in the fortifications, the beautiful basilica of San Miniato, with its old bishop's palace (1294-1320), Benedictine monastery, and sixteenth century tower campanile of Baccio d'Agnolo. Tradition situates a Christian church here as early as the fourth century after Christ, but authentic record of it begins only in the eleventh century. The church is a Romanesque basilica of pure type, with elevated choir and low, open crypt beneath it, supported by many beau-

tiful slender marble columns of much variety of design and color. This old church, and that of Fiesole, are, as already mentioned, the only truly Romanesque churches in or near Florence, and, for its form alone, San Miniato is particularly worth careful examination. But this examining will also reveal a fine wealth of beautiful and interesting details of stone sculpture, tomb decoration, niello pavement, old mosaic, wood-carving, fifteenth century frescoes, and work in colored tiles.

Among the fifteenth century embellishments, most conspicuous perhaps is the little parti-colored chapel or shrine built in the nave in 1448 by Michelozzo for Piero de' Medici to inclose a "marvelous crucifix, which was believed to have bowed its head to San Giovanni Gualberto, as marking approval of his generosity in sparing his brother's murderer." The elaborate interior paneling is said to be by Luca della Robbia.

But if this is the most conspicuous of the Renaissance additions to the old basilica, more interesting and important is the chapel of James, that most virtuous and admirable young cardinal of Portugal, who died while visiting Florence in 1459. The tomb is the masterpiece of Antonio Rossellino, and the four tondi set in checkered green, white, and black-tiled background are by Luca della Robbia. The recumbent figure of the cardinal and his patterned robes, and the figures of the two cherubs below his feet and head, are among the finest productions of the decorative school of stone-cutter sculptors. The tomb is, however, somewhat marred



Photo, Alinari

TOMB MONUMENT OF CARDINAL JACOB OF PORTUGAL  
Antonio Rossellino: San Miniato



by the realistic drawn curtains, modeled in stone by the sculptor.

The beautiful black and white marble façade of the church was done in 1491, and bears an interesting old mosaic in gold, restored in the fourteenth, and again in the fifteenth century. The campanile, begun in 1524 to take the place of an earlier small one ruined in 1499, was still in process of construction in 1530, when the siege of Florence took place. San Miniato was the center of the defense of the city, and all its old buildings, together with the fortifications rapidly constructed under Michelangelo's direction, constituted a sort of fortress, which was the chief object of attack by Orange's army. The top of the campanile was broken off in order to permit the seating of two cannon, which did much to hold the besiegers in check, but which naturally made the tower the special target of their cannon. It was Michelangelo's versatile genius that devised the curious defense—rather ludicrous to think of in connection with modern artillery—of hanging great swinging mattresses of wool from the projecting parapet of the tower, which, floating freely and hurled here and there by the enemy's cannon balls without touching the walls, kept the tower uninjured. In front of the façade of the church itself a great earthwork was heaped up at Michelangelo's direction, and thus the church also, which he called his "bride," was successfully carried through those evil days.

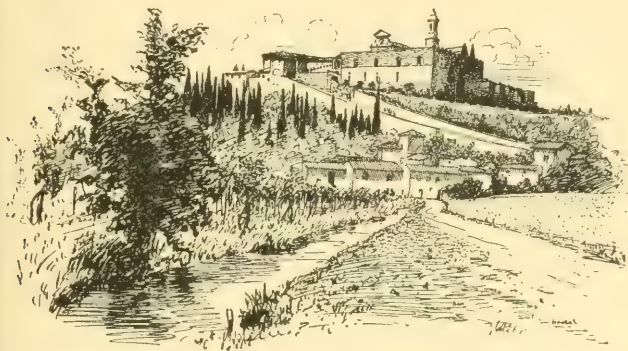
All of the floor and walls of the church are thickly set with tombstones. In fact, it is a part

of the great burying-ground which now includes the pavement in front of it and practically all the space about the church formerly comprised within the fortifications. Under Duke Cosimo the hasty and provisional works of Michelangelo were extended and strengthened into a veritable fortress, that bore the Medicean arms. This fortress remained in good preservation until the end of the seventeenth century, after which it was allowed to fall gradually into ruin. To-day the remains of the walls serve to inclose the fantastic cemetery. As the ground space has proven insufficient for the increasing population of the place, a bizarre, balconied, three-story structure, absurd and revolting in its likeness to some temporary pleasure pavilion of an entertainment park, has been erected. This product of modern taste, or rather of the utter lack of it, by the side of the beautiful old basilica, with its abundant suggestions of Byzantine-Roman origin, an origin reaching back to the dark days of semi-barbarous civilization, must be suggestive to that constantly passing train of sightseeing representatives of our modern day.

Out by the Porta Romana, and along the Via Romana for two or three miles, and one comes to one of the show-places of Florence, the Certosa. The visit to it produces either one of two quite distinct impressions and memories. Either it is left in one's mind as a place once of great interest but now a half-real, half-artificial, museum revelation of the mysteries and mummeries of a monastery. Or it is a memory undisturbed by any knowledge of



the national ownership and supervision of the convent, and wholly satisfying as that of a wonderful medieval fortress convent, isolated and inviolate, seated nobly on a beautiful hill overlooking a laughing valley and plain, to the peoples of which the soft echoes of the monastery bells come as frequent re-



The Certosa, "seated nobly on a beautiful hill overlooking a laughing valley."

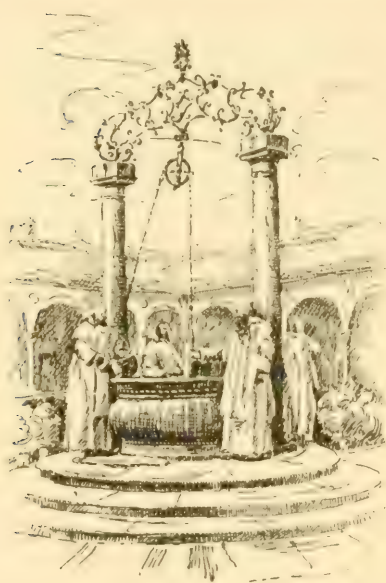
minders of the devoted, self-mortifying, contemplative, ecstatic life of the spirit.

The first sight of the great building, or rather group of buildings, gray, walled in, tower-crowned, on the hill summit, goes far to aid in realizing the Certosa as a genuine relic of medieval monasticism. Which, indeed, it is, only it happens to be a show relic, made self-conscious by over-attention. The short, winding walk up the hill from the Via Romana tram (which leaves the Mercato Nuovo in Florence every twenty minutes or so) gives one a moment to recall the story of the foundation and rapid up-

building of the great fortified monastery. Its church and cloisters, school-rooms and living quarters were built by Niccolò Acciajuoli, in the middle of the fourteenth century. The hill is called Montaguto, and the monastery was first known as the Certosa of Montaguto. Now it is called the Certosa of Galluzzo, from the village at its foot, or, more often, the Certosa of the Val d'Ema, from the little stream that winds about the hill. Certosa is

the name of any monastery or cloister of the Carthusian monkish order.

The few white-robed monks, last of nearly one hundred that formerly lived here, whom the government permits to finish their silent lives in the monastery, serve as guides to the visitors, and help the imagination in seeing the real Certosa. They lead one by devious ways through church and cloisters, into small chapels, and along



Certosa has "a beautiful cloister garden, with a fascinating stone well in its middle."

cool corridors, and into their own little rooms and gardens. There is much to see and a good deal

to feel. There are pictures and carved stalls; a beautiful cloister garden, with a fascinating stone wall in its middle; and always from the outer rooms the reaching views out over the Ema and its valley, and across it to distant hills and scattered villages.

Of all the artistic treasures of the Certosa, easily first are the tomb reliefs of the Acciajuoli family in the church, and reputed to be the work of Andrea Orcagna and Donatello. It is the figure in low relief of Cardinal Agnolo Acciajuoli in the chapel of S. Andrea that is attributed to Donatello, while the four tombs of the founder, Niccolò; his son, Lorenzo; his sister, Lapa (wife of Manente Buondelmonte), and his father, are attributed to Orcagna. The tombs are in excellent preservation, and the figures, especially those of Lorenzo and of the Cardinal Agnolo, are admirable.

The usual souvenir of the visit to the Certosa is a primitively patterned little jug of the special liqueur made in the monastery. This liqueur is less famous than that of the Pères Chartreux—and deservedly so. If one wants it, however, it is to be got in the Farmacia. The most interesting guide among the few remaining monks is an Irishman, of clever brain and tongue. But there is hardly any one of these shuffling, white-robed guides but is entertaining.

If one is of an adventurous spirit, and would get a little beyond the obligatory sights, he can find opportunity and reward in plenty for indulging this impulse by pushing out a little farther into the coun-

try. Not very far beyond the Certosa, two or three miles, perhaps, is an objective point for a day's outing. This is Impruneta, a village of pottery workers and contadini, with a famous old square-towered church that houses a few very precious religious and artistic relics. The religious relic beyond price is a miracle-working Madonna figure, always heavily veiled, that issues in holy procession whenever there is a plague to stop in Florence or roundabout. The art relics are certain very beautiful works of the della Robbias.

Impruneta is on the high bounding hill range south of Florence. From our roof-terrace we see it on all clear days, a spot hovered over by the smoke of its potteries, and marked by a single tall, square tower cutting the horizon. The village seems to nestle in a shallow pass in the hill-crest, and always had for us someway an alluring invitation to visit it. And the day came when we responded to this call. It is a day we shall not forget for its country scenes and simple, cheerful people, singing in their vineyards and along their fragrant lanes.

By tram to Tavernuzze, which is beyond the Certosa, and then by a little diligence, or on foot, up a long, winding way among the hill-slope vineyards. Men, women, and children were gathering the last of the grapes, and slow, white oxen were hauling the *bigonie* and casks to the wine-sheds. A fragmentary chapel on a nearby dominating hilltop was pointed out as the last remnant of a once powerful stronghold of the robber-baron Buondelmonte family. Perched above the valley road leading from

Rome and Siena, these gentlemen highwaymen levied toll on all passersby, and only gave up their lucrative profession on the insistent request of a Floren-



"Slow, white oxen were hauling the *bigonie* and casks to the wine-sheds."

tine army. By the terms of their capitulation with honor, they were to remove to Florence and live under the regardful eye of authority, although with



full freedom and princely standing. They soon came to be one of the most powerful families of the Florentine self-knighted nobility. It was the murder of a light-worded Buondelmonte at the foot of the Mars statue at one end of Ponte Vecchio that set all the Florentines at work fighting each other, as Guelphs and Ghibellines.

In Impruneta village itself, a village dating from Etruscan and Roman times, and that has become, because of its wonder-working Madonna image, a famous pilgrim center, the chief objective point is the old church, large for the little town, but not for the great open square on which it faces. The church, which boasts an eleventh century foundation, was built about as it stands now by a repentant Buondelmonte, in the sixteenth century. Within it are a few examples of the work of Luca and Andrea della Robbia, in their simpler, purer manner, as fine as may be found anywhere. They include a tabernacle or shrine, flanked on either side with large figures of Saints Augustine and John the Baptist, and with a *predella* below of wonderfully graceful and beautiful flying angels. The very expressive Crucifixion that was originally within the frame of the shrine has been replaced by a piece of the True Cross, guarded by iron doors, and has been put in the adjoining chapel to the right. At the left of the nave is the chapel of the hidden Madonna, and this also is adorned by the handicraft and genius of the della Robbias. There are two large figures of St. Paul and St. Luke, and a colored ceiling and frieze. The chapels themselves are perhaps the



work of Michelozzo, the favorite architect of Cosimo de' Medici.

We saw some other objects of interest in the church: a beautiful carved singing gallery, a crucifix by Giambologna, and in the nave and sacristy certain pictures of interest to students. But we were of mind to get out again into the open air; into the piazza where old women and young women and children and babies were placidly weaving straw hats; where the white oxen were slowly dragging their laden carts of half-crushed grapes spreading the vintage odor in all the air. We bought some grapes and radishes to add to our lunch basket, and went a little way up into the pine wood that presses to the very edge of the village. It is, indeed, from this pine wood, that in old days covered all the hills hereabout, that Impruneta gets its name through the rather extraordinary corruption of Pineta.

Then we came into the village again, and had coffee in a little café garden, where laden fig-trees dripped their sweet juice, and even let fall their golden fruit, ripe to bursting, on to our very table. Then we wandered on, buying some little donkey bells for souvenirs, and started fairly on our homeward way, only to be attracted by a roadside villa with a great hill-slope garden that was too inviting to pass without trying for permission to explore it.

But certainly, the forestieri might come in and see not only the park, but the villa itself, and the monkeys of the padrone, and everything, for the padrone was in England, and had left express word that inquiring strangers were to be made welcome!

And so we did see it all—a curious villa home of a wealthy bachelor, crowded with pick-me-ups of every sort, from sword-fish saws to valuable-looking old books in the crowded library. And live monkeys and cockatoos, and a wonderful bathing pavilion, mostly decoration and smoking loggia, and with con-



"A cabbage bed, with beautiful great pottery vases set about in it."

siderably less than luxurious bathing facilities. And lastly, a cabbage bed, with beautiful great pottery vases set about in it, the most ornamental cabbage bed one could ever hope to see.

Then on down the winding way, the beautiful hill-slope way, towards the Via Romana. Sweeping views of Arno valley, of red-gray Florence and her background hills. We ate grapes as we walked and figs when we rested. We passed a little church that must have been worth entering, but it was too

fine outside. And we came to the great villa of the Antinore family, Villa Rose, but we preferred to walk steeply on down its magnificent avenue of cypresses than to try for admission and curiosity-hunting. Finally, even in the Via Romana tram, there was interest. The prideful owner of an enormous bunch of grapes hung it so conspicuously to the overhead hand-rail that the good-natured *dogana* officer at the Florence gate simply had to take cognizance of it and charge its indignant owner one soldo for octroi!

Another objective point for a day's outing with a little tramping in it is Signa and its nearby country. It is easily reached by tram, or by the Florence-Empoli railway line. The tramping comes in connection with a visit to Malmantile, the curious fortified village or great unroofed stockade-like *castello*, which crowns a hilltop on the old highway from Florence to Pisa. Signa to-day is primarily a place of straw-hat plaiting; in old days it seems to have been mostly given over to fighting and burning and pillaging.

No Florence visitor but gets to know the straw hats of Signa; the great piles of them in the Mercato Nuovo—pale blue, rose, green, white, and just straw color, and so light and flexible and durable, and with it all so cheap. Not, indeed, that all "Leghorn" hats come from Signa, but many do, while most of the others come from any of a dozen other Tuscan villages, rather than from Livorno on the sea. After the harvest, the commonest of all

village and country-road sights is the constant, unregarded, automatic shuffling and bending of the little straws in the hands of the women and girls. They plait as they walk along the road or sidewalk, as they gossip and laugh with each other, as they sit in reverie in chairs before the house doors. Under one arm is the bundle of prepared straws, under the other the coiled-up, long "string" or braid of already plaited straw, and in the two hands held together the growing end of this braid, with its bobbing, bending tuft of separate straws. There are usually from four to six straws in the tuft, but the old women handle even eight or nine. There are shops or factories, too, where long rows of expert workers sit the days through turning out meters and meters of the straw braid, ready for winding and sewing together into soft flat hats. In the Mercato Nuovo the hats are mostly of two kinds; one thin, and nearly transparent, made of stiff, gauze-like stuff, and the other thicker, heavier, made of braided straw. The gauzy ones can be put on top of the thicker ones, so that your garden hat may really consist of two hats, one fitting closely on top of the other.

Signa has been the center of the Tuscan straw hat-making since very early times. But our interest in those early times concerns itself more with Signa's fighting and castle building than with her more commonplace industry. As a sort of outer stronghold of Florence, a buffer between her and Pisa, Signa had more than her fair share of battling in the lively days of Guelph and Ghibelline. Florence got hold of

Signa in the twelfth century, and began an intermittent castle building and fortifying. In the thirteenth century John Hawkwood, fighting for Pisa, captured Signa, and in the fourteenth century Florence lost the city again to the famous Lucchese leader, Castruccio Castracani. She soon regained it, however, only to have it again captured and sacked by that indefatigable mercenary, Hawkwood. With the beginning of the fifteenth century Signa finally came to some degree of rest, remaining permanently in the hands of the Republic.

Of the castles and fortifications built up and torn down, and built up again, in those earnest days, the most impressive remains are the great wall and gates of Lastra a Signa, which are, indeed, alone impressive enough to repay one for the excursion. In Lastra, too, is a beautiful fifteenth century loggia (di Sant' Antonio, under the theater), along with various other architectural bits of interest. In Signa itself (Ponte a Signa) there are some remnants of the old castle and fortifications on the hill or bluff that rises sharply above the river. And the bridge, several times partly destroyed and rebuilt, the last time in quite modern days, can serve well as a *point d'appui* for the imagination that would picture the moving scenes of Signa in the centuries gone.

The road to Malmantile is uphill and winding. It takes off to the left just where one starts to leave Lastra a Signa for Ponte a Signa, and follows up a little stream that, in escaping from the hills, has cut for itself a picturesque ravine. A man in shooting coat started up the ravine just as we did, and



it was our misfortune to have to witness his prowess among the poor frightened hedge-sparrows, that seem to be the Italian sportsman's prey. If, indeed, he had only been a true sportsman and kept to wing shots! But not at all; he used his shotgun like a rifle, aiming carefully at each pitiful little bunch of feathers huddling among the foliage. No other civilized country in the world, unless it be Japan, has been so recklessly regardless of its song-birds, so brutally complete in its approximate extermination of them. In these days, however, there is a strong and growing sentiment, cultivated by an energetic society of nature lovers, making toward preservation of the bird remnants. And so persistent are the songsters in their love of Italy's blue skies and soft airs, that, in spite of their centuries of persecution, they seem ready with the slightest encouragement to restock the coverts and hedge-rows and fields, and to make Italy the land of bird song it ought in all fitness to be.

Climbing out of the ravine, our way took us up an open hill-slope, and, after an hour's walking, to Malmantile. It was a good day to be out, clear for the long views and warm for the quiet restings by the roadside. Some grapes were still hanging, but the pickers had abandoned the vineyards, so that all was still in them except for the few, the altogether too few, staccato bird chirps. Malmantile was an amazing place to enter. It was a veritable walled-in city, or rather not a city but the smallest sort of village, a hamlet of poor little houses, with one street, and no shops. Soon we realized that it



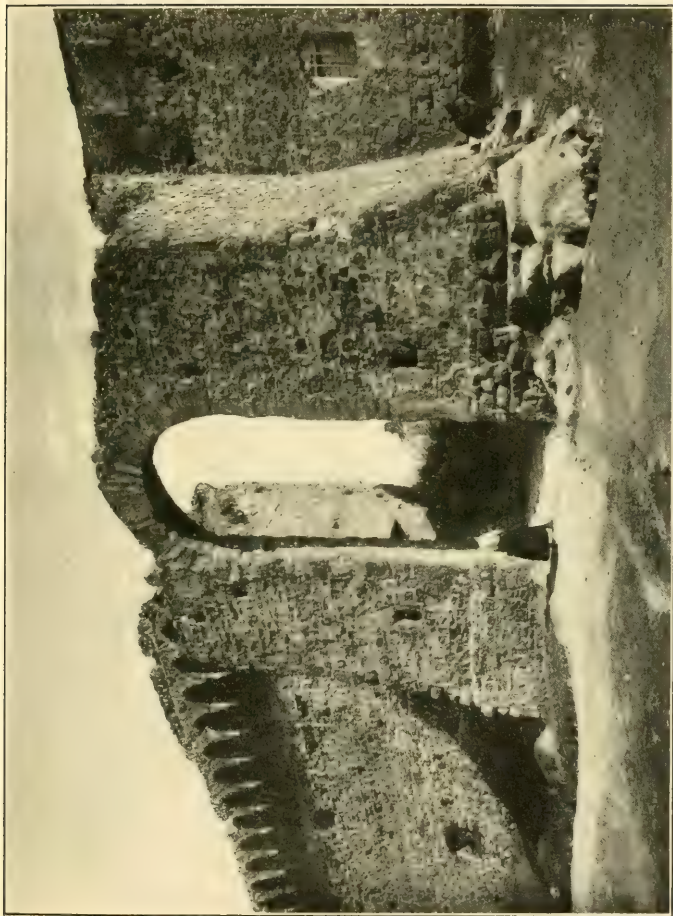


Photo. Alinari

MALMANTILE (15th Century)



had been originally, in truth, no fortified town, no walled village, but simply a great, unroofed, square castello—a castello all walls and wall-towers, but without banqueting halls and living-rooms—just a walled camp. The walls themselves, intact in all their extent, except for the two open gateways, are not so in their height. They have been cut off, broken off, at the top, for several meters. Here and there they are evidently nearly of their original height, for the expanded upper courses appear. They are massive, immense, and impressive.

The hamlet they inclose is most abject—dilapidated huts, decrepit barnyard beasts, apathetic people. What an odd heritage of war and days of glory is theirs! And what a marvel of reaching view of distant hills and placid valley stretches they have from the crest of their crumbling walls! But this heritage means nothing to them; this scenery of Umbrian hills does nothing to fill their hungry mouths. Want blinds their eyes to beauty and chokes any curiosity to know the story of past days. Malmantile's walls to-day are a sort of dust of Cæsar that stops the wind away from these poor Tuscan sons.

## CHAPTER XVII

### THE STREETS

#### YESTERDAY AND TO-DAY

TO say that much of the life of a people can be seen in the streets of its cities is to utter a familiar truism. But this truism is particularly true of the Italian people, and even more particularly if the streets are those of Naples. In those crowded, clamorous, narrow *rampe* that climb steeply up from the Via Roma to the Corso Vittorio Emanuele there is little of the private life of their inhabitants that is left to the imagination. But no Italian city or town but has its characteristic and revealing streets, in which the people carry on openly many of their personal affairs.

In Florence the streets have a very distinctive color and atmosphere, and expose, even to the most casual onlooker, much of the special character of the work and play of the present-day Florentines. But to the attentive and persistent observer they do even more. For there are in these streets still some of the echoes and subtle fragrance of the old splendid days of artist, poet, warrior, and merchant noble. Here an old palace wall of great blocks of rough-

hewn stone, or a square machicolated tower; there a carved stone doorway or window frame, or a fantastic wrought-iron fanale on an angle wall, or fading Madonna and Child in a shrine in a wall niche; and everywhere the set-in carved stemmi of guild and noble families. All these architectural relics tell their bits of story. And if the observant wanderer be interested enough, and informed somewhat, he can make of all these bits a mosaic background of the Florentine life of yesterday, against the dull glow of whose ancient but enduring pigments the garish colors of the life-picture of to-day will both contrast and harmonize.



A torch socket on a palace wall.

An element in the street pictures of Florence, and one quite lacking in the other larger cities of Italy, is the bounding of almost every perspective by the background of green hill-side; the silvery sheen of breeze-swept olive orchard, the distant white spots, black-girdled, of villas set in cypress gardens. Florence is not a village inclosed in a field or garden, but neither is it a great city that shuts out all the world of Nature. Its hills lift above it on every side, except down Arno, with their slopes starting

swiftly up from almost every point of its margin. Its streets all end in winding ways among these hills. All this puts into the street pictures of Florence something which lends them a beauty and a character that is their most unforgettable part.

And it is a part which has a significance that must not be overlooked in any attempt to picture old Florence. For these hills and gardens and villas and nearby villages had their important place in the life of the Florence of the Medici. How many of these hill-slopes, and how much of this verdure, does one see in the paintings and frescoes of the Florentine masters? How often is Fiesole on her hill the village in the background? And how many of these very villas and gardens were the favorite homes of the merchant nobles and the haunts of the artists and poets, whose names are the chapter titles in the story of old Florence? Florentine life of yesterday, like that of to-day, must be looked at through sun-shot air against blue sky, green slopes of olive and grape, and overflowing gardens of rose and jasmine, surrounded by the dark cypress towers of silence.

It is hard to know how best to see the streets of Florence and their sights. Shall one set to work systematically with map and guide-book in hand and hunt, first of all, for relics of the old days? If so, there is a little paper-covered book of a hundred pages, called "*Firenze Scomparsa*," that will help much in the search for the scattered remnants of the Florence that is gone. This book is written by Cav. Guido Carocci, who evidently knows and loves



his old Florence. A translation under the title of "Bygone Florence" has been published.

Or shall "literary landmarks" be the first game? If so, Laurence Hutton's book is the standard guide. It is complete and interesting, and undoubtedly as accurate as such a book can be.

Or, finally, shall the newest things come first? Shall the Florentine life of to-day, the life of the city Tuscans and their visitors from all the world first have one's eyes? If so, then there is, indeed, no guide but the color and hum of the streets themselves to lead one to the best adventure.

We had deserted our hill-side villino for a town stay one week, and took the opportunity for some special visits to the streets. One morning we left our hotel before breakfast, and went to have our coffee on the sidewalk in the Piazza Vittorio Emanuele. The florid new buildings surrounding the piazza were no less uninteresting by morning twilight than they are at other times. But the life was very different from that more familiar, leisurely one of the five o'clock hour, when the cafés are full and overflowing. The people of early morning were all moving. Little red and blue and green and yellow carts, heaped with flowers or vegetables or fruits or growing plants, were following microscopic donkeys at all angles across the place. Most of them were plainly converging on the entrance to the Via Calimara, which leads to the Mercato Nuovo. It was a Thursday morning in early November, which means that it was flower market time. We gulped our good Gambrinus coffee, for we wanted to follow

the carts. But hot coffee enforces a certain leisureliness, and we had time to try and reconstruct backwards the ugly gray stucco stretch of modernity along the west face of the piazza.

It was here and near by that some of the most interesting part of old Florence stood. Indeed, here was the center of the ancient Roman city that was the first Florence, the Florence of twenty-five centuries ago. The forum was near the corner of Via degli Speciali, and near by were superb mosaic-floored thermæ, whose vestiges can be seen now in the Archeological Museum. Fifteen feet below the present ground surface were found the old street pavements, with the wheel ruts still visible, and the relics of waterpipes, sewers, and well.

On the ruins of Roman Florence rose medieval Florence. The Old Market was its center of life. About it were the fortress palaces of the great families, above which rose the forest of towers that must have been the most striking thing in any view of the Florence of that day. "Attached to the palaces and towers were the 'loggie' (or verandas), which were of characteristic significance, being symbol and proof of the nobility and power of those families that owned them—they were the frame of all that was most brilliant and gay in the life of those days, and took the place of the ball-room and reception-room of to-day. During the balmy summer evenings friends and relations met and whiled away the starry hours with conversations, songs, and music. Betrothals and marriages were discussed and arranged in the midday hours. The May-time festi-

vals were celebrated here, and repasts and banquets freely given, the public looking on with respect. For constant use of the 'loggie' by the patricians had rendered them almost sacred, so that they even became haunts of refuge in times of dread." (Carocci.)

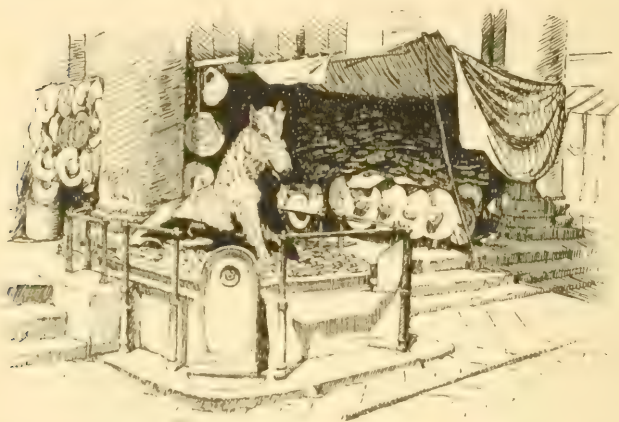
With the growth of the Old Market and the crowding in and about it of the Jewish vendors, the noble families emigrated and the Jews took gradual possession of the palaces and towers, making honeycomb of them for the hiving of their increasing thousands. The Ghetto was crowded and dirty, but it was at least picturesque. What has succeeded it is cleaner without doubt. It is also undeniably ugly. It may well be that cleanliness must have precedence of picturesqueness. But it was not necessary in order to establish this precedence to destroy with ruthless iconoclastic hand every trace, almost, of the great treasure of wall-painting, stone-carving, and sculptured wood that gathered in the crowded, dirtied old palaces. There was such salvage possible there as would have given Florence another priceless center of art relics. But Florence in its third period pre-



Giovanni da Bologna's  
"devil of the Mercato  
Vecchio."

ferred to forget its parent of the Renaissance and grandparent of the Roman emperors.

A little cart came by that was carrying a veritable forest in miniature, and then another that seemed all aflame; and we followed them. The Mercato



“The Mercato Nuovo, where the big bronze boar keeps guard.”

Nuovo, where the big bronze boar keeps guard, was of a bustle indescribable. Where other days in the week it is a quiet market of straw hats and silk shawls—in winter woolen crocheted ones—on Thursday mornings it is a crowded, odorous, chattering flower market. The “little people” of the country-side bring their little treasures of blossom and greenery in little carts of littlest donkeys. Each has a place by a column’s foot, and around him he groups his offerings: the products of his own loving care. It is no big, gorgeous affair, like the Paris flower market, but it is an intensely human and per-

sonal offering of beauty and affection. On this particular morning of ours it was mostly an azalea show, and the dwarf bushes in pots, with their burden of color, were crowded as thickly as possible over all the floor of the great loggia.

At noon the market takes out its luncheon and feeds itself. People and donkeys eat side by side. Indeed, the public lunching of the common people is one of the characteristic street scenes of Florence. In the Piazza del Duomo we saw one day a delightful lunch party, sitting and kneeling about a scarlet horse-blanket spread out on the street pavement. Cabby's wife had brought the lunch basket and had emptied it on the scarlet cloth under the warm sun of noon. On one corner of the cloth was carefully placed cabby's shabby top hat; on another the bottle of red wine, while the bread and cheese arranged themselves conveniently to the hands of cabby, cabby's wife and little girl, and cabby's horse-feeder. Over their heads the gaunt cab horse, crested with the cock's feathers that keep off the evil eye, swung his great nose bag, from which he munched his own luncheon of hay.

The feeding and watering of the horses and washing of the cabs are an affair that gives special employment to three or four boys or men at each cab rank. Each has a little pile of hay, and a water-pail, easily refilled from the nearest street fountain. As the cabs drive up for their noon rest they are at once taken possession of by these thrifty lads, who earn a few sous from each lordly driver sitting aloft, while his horse and vehicle are cared for.



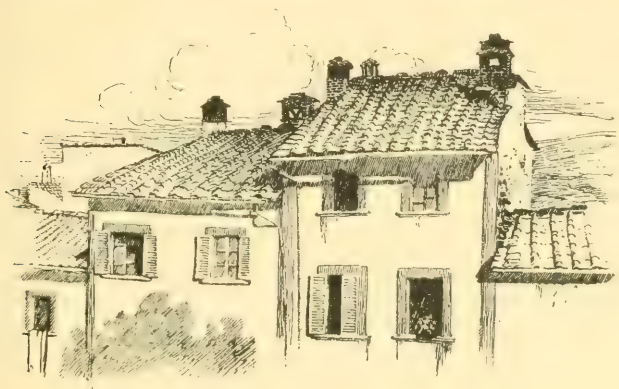
All manner of Florentines eat in the street. It is like the four o'clock *pains chauds* habit of the Parisians. There are booths, where all day long in the autumn especially, hot chestnuts, hot boiled potatoes, or cornmeal cakes dropped into boiling oil, are vended. Hot doughnuts, two for three soldi, and waffles and segments cut out of flat, thin, brown chestnut pies, two feet in diameter, are in great demand. In the shops at noon everybody is munching. Sometimes they retire to a back room, but as often not. In the dark caverns of *carbone* shops, into which the hindered daylight comes only enough to distinguish moving blackness from stationary blackness, I have seen the coaled imps cramming down their smudgy bread and cheese with a most cheerful disregard for the mineral condiment. And it was always fascinating to watch a whole wood-working shop at luncheon—a happy, chaffing company of master workmen and apprentices squatting together in the shavings.

At noon, too, one sees most abundantly the little baskets going up and down from street to windows, high up in the tower-like tenements, bearing eggs, bread, snails, bottles of wine, a newspaper, anything, indeed.

The streets are busiest, of course, in certain places and at certain times. On Fridays the Piazza Signoria and adjoining streets (Via Calzalaio, Via della Condotta, Via dei Lamberti) are filled with violently talking and gesticulating men. They are traders, mostly from the nearby country and villages, and this is a sort of weekly curb exchange.



In winter-time many of these traders carry green umbrellas, and wear heavy terra-cotta colored coats, with wide fur collars and cuffs—a striking sort of uniform of the soil. They strike hands over a completed trade, and crowd into Paoli's and Lapi's



Housetops and chimney-pots.

restaurants to further seal their agreements over good wine and food.

Every fine afternoon, and especially Sundays, the Lung' Arno from Ponte Santa Trinità to the Cascine, and the park itself, are crowded with the carriages of the aristocrats. There is also a plentiful sprinkling always of the hired cabs of the simpler citizens and tourists. It is the Florentine Corso.

The reference to the tourists suggests a feature of modern Florentine life that can by no means be overlooked—even by the tourist himself. Florence is enormously visited. And being a city of only moderate size, this visitation is readily apparent.

There are three distinct tourist seasons connected by little parties of irregulars that come dropping in all through the year. The old idea that Italy in summer is simply a hot, steamy pest-hole of malaria and misery has been largely dissipated, thanks to modern science and the safe-returning of a number of summer-vacationing teachers. In fact, summer is now a special tourist season—a season largely of caravans of women school-teachers, who do not interest the shopkeepers of the Ponte Vecchio and Lung' Arno much. And yet they make altogether a good many two-lire purchases. But the big shops are mostly closed; the shopkeepers, and much of the shop stuff, spend the summer in Lucerne.

The principal tourist season is that of the early spring. Then the Via Tornabuoni and the hotel and pension district, along the Arno clear down to the Cascine, is one procession and murmur of familiar faces and nasal "all rights." Then the shops do business.

Again, in the autumn there is a reinvasion. So many tourists come south for the winter—Florence, Siena, Rome, all have their full Anglo-American winter colonies. And the growing custom of going to Europe by the northern steamers and coming home by the southern ones (Genoa, Naples), or vice versa, gives Italy its full share now of the whole great host of annual American visitors.

One summer afternoon at the Gambrinus, when the sun and siesta were having their way with most, we were roused from our own half-dozing dawdling

over our after-luncheon coffee by a whirl of the piazza pigeons, and then the fluttering down near us of seven little school-teachers, each with a serious face, a small camp-stool, and a guide-book. They had made a triumphant morning, but now the churches were closed on them, and hunger and exhaustion could be reckoned with. How hard they were taking it, and how absolutely faithfully to their red-backed taskmaster! But how happily, and with what a realizing sense of dreams come true! The summer represented the saving and planning of years; every day, every hour, must make its rich repayment. Their chirpings and bobbings to the quick-witted, politely impertinent waiter, their gurglings over the cool Italian *sorbetti*, their intense adding and counting of the soldi, their grudging but over-generous determination of the tips, and their final swift scurrying off with waving camp-stools, and guide-books—it was all the perfectness of how we do it.

But if we are good seeing for the Italians, so are they for us.

A day and evening of festa, with the spectacular Masses in the churches, the processions in the streets, and the fireworks at night from Ponte Carraja or San Miniato hill, and a big band concert under all the silent, stone Florentine notables in the Court of Honor of the Uffizi—that is all good seeing. The festa of San Giovanni Battista, which I have told something of in another chapter, is the biggest of all the religious festivals—unless it is that Saturday before Easter, when the dove issues from the Duomo

and lights the fireworks car from the sacred Pazzi fire.

At 8.30 in the morning of this day there is Mass and communion at Santi Apostoli, after which comes the striking together of the sacred stones, supposed to have been brought by a Pazzi from the Holy Land. Priests and choir boys were greatly excited during the performance we saw, although there was no particular ritual about it. The stones were simply rubbed together by a priest until a little flame came; then two candles were lighted from this flame, and were placed in closed lanterns, which were carried in solemn procession through the streets to the Duomo. Any person might stop the procession to light his candle, join it, and give lights to others. The procession entered through the large portal, and the two candles in the lanterns were blessed at the first holy water font at the right of the entrance. The large candles of the Duomo's altar were then lighted from the little lanterns, and High Mass was said by the Archbishop of Florence. At noon exactly, the dove lighted by a sacred candle was sent sliding along a wire from the altar to the fireworks car outside the main portal. The car had been dragged in that morning from the Porto Prato by four white oxen. As the flaming dove touched the fuse in the car the fireworks began to explode. It was then dragged to the densely crowded Piazza Vittorio Emanuele, where it was surrounded and acclaimed by the multitude and more fireworks were set off. All the people of the city attend this celebration—a very good-natured, although excited,

crowd. The inevitable accident came last year, when a little girl and a woman were killed and several others were wounded by the fireworks in the Piazza Vittorio Emanuele. This may mean some modification of the celebration for the future.

The festa of San Lorenzo is celebrated chiefly by a High Mass in San Lorenzo church and a "free day" for the new sacristy and Medici chapel. It results in a rabble and rout all through and about the church. It is the most perfunctory and irreverent religious performance that Florence has annually to offer.

Of secular festivals, one of the best observed is the 20th of September, the anniversary of the storming of the Porta Pia at Rome and the consequent uniting of all Italy. The streets are crowded all day, and bells ring with great enthusiasm for morning, noon, and evening. A curious sort of free-for-all running race takes place. Sixty-nine young men made the race when we saw it. It is sport for all, the sort of thing some of us Americans, sick of our over-trained, over-glorified, club and collegiate athletics are crying aloud for. But there is another side of it. Here are soft shop clerks, weak-hearted office men, without any preparation or preliminary physical examination, running their hearts out in one single annual violent over-exertion. Still Italy's Pietro Dorando, the baker's assistant, Marathon wonder of 1908, is a graduate of this sort of athletic school.

We had one day a festa in our own village, Settignano. The singing club of the town, the Philharmonica, took advantage of some convenient minor



church festival to institute a festa, whose receipts should go to getting new uniforms for the club. There was an exhibition of marble- and stone-cutting in the daytime, with singing by the club, and in the evening grand illumination of the main street and church piazza by hundreds of little red and yellow lamps, that were simply small jelly tumblers of oil with floating wicks. The street buzzed with Settignanese and contadini families from the poderi round about. There were hot waffles for a soldo each; and tiny cornucopias of sorbetto for another soldo. The band played, the Philharmonica sang, and at the end there were very good fireworks. The Italians go in for fireworks. They make most ingenious rockets and candles and mines, and set pieces of much intricacy, and they let them off with good judgment.

Outside of festa days Florence is not particularly animated at night. There are band concerts in the piazzas, to be sure, and always a lively crowd at the Gambrinus, where a feeble orchestra plays. There is not very much attraction for foreigners in the way of play and opera. Italy, with all its singing, does not support good concert and opera houses with anything like the generosity of the Germans and Parisians. Moving picture shows and cheap vaudeville do better.

In Florence the two or three theaters are open irregularly, depending on traveling companies of players or singers to fill them occasionally for a few weeks at a time. The custom still prevails of getting two separate tickets, at two separate prices, for one's admission and seat. Except when an unusual



artist is playing or singing the prices are low. The audience is more likely to be made up of middle-class and artisans than of aristocrats, except when some special performance is worked up as a social occasion. Then there is grand opera dressing, and a good deal of fuss and feathers generally. Other times the people stroll in in street costume, smoke between acts, and enjoy themselves naturally. They hiss the villain—one night in Roberto Bracco's patriotic "*Romanticismo*" they would hardly let him finish his praise of Austria—and they call aloud to the tenor or soprano as he or she reaches the high note. The bravos invariably drown the climax. But you can always see a climax in an Italian theater, even if you can't hear it.

Along the Arno line of hotels two or three bands of street singers with guitars and mandolins make their pilgrimages every night. Each has a male falsetto singer. One of these falsettos in particular has become known to thousands of tourists for his extraordinary woman's voice. You wrap up a few soldi in white paper and drop them from your window into the street.

Late at night, when all else is still, you begin to realize how many clock towers there are in Florence. Eighty-four strokes of varied loudness and tone are a few more than is necessary to announce midnight. But a resident in almost any Arno hotel can hear the hours from seven different towers.

Almost all the rambling notes of this chapter so far have been of Florence to-day. However, most of the rest of the book tells of finding the bequests

and relics of her yesterdays. But almost nowhere in it have I set down as yet any "literary landmarks," none, that is, of post-Renaissance *littérateurs*. This has been done once for all by Laurence Hutton, and it is to him that one must go for real guidance. Just by way of lending point to this recommendation, I confess to filching from him half of the following score of finger-posts.

Of Florentines, Dante lived (perhaps!) in No. 2, Via San Martino, near the Duomo. And he sat (perhaps!) on the forerunner of the now modernized "Dante seat" of the Piazza del Duomo.

Savonarola preached in the Duomo and the church of San Marco. He lived in San Marco monastery; was imprisoned in the Palazzo Vecchio; spent his last night in the Hall of the Consiglio (Sala dei Cinque Centi); and was hanged and burned at the spot in the Piazza della Signoria now marked by a plate.

Michelangelo was nursed in the Villa Buonarotti (near Settignano), and had for study the closet-room now shown in his house on the Via Ghibellina.

Galileo lived for some years in No. 3, Costa San Giorgio (south side of Arno). He died at No. 23, Via del Piano di Giullare, the Villa Galileo. Milton visited him here in 1638, and probably again in 1639.

Machiavelli lived and died in No. 16, Via Guicciardini, on the south side of Arno, near the Ponte Vecchio. Opposite Machiavelli's house is that of the famous historian, Francesco Guicciardini.

Alferi lived and died in the Palazzo Masetti, No. 2, Lung' Arno Corsini, near Ponte Santa Trinità.

Amerigo Vespucci was born and lived in the house at No. 18, Borgo Ognissanti, now occupied by a hospital founded by him.

Among the famous temporary or permanent literary expatriates who have landmarks in Florence, the Brownings lived in Casa Guidi, in the Piazza Santa Felicità (corner Via Maggio, near south end of Ponte Vecchio). Mrs. Browning wrote "Casa Guidi Windows" and "Aurora Leigh" here; and died in this house in 1861.

Nathaniel Hawthorne came to Florence in May, 1858, and lived first in Casa Bella, No. 124, Via de' Serragli (near the Torrigiani Gardens). In August he moved out to Villa Montaùto, on Bellosguardo.

George Eliot and George Lewes came in May, 1860, and lived first in the Pension Suisse, No. 13, Via Tornabuoni.

T. A. Trollope and mother came in 1843, and lived in a house next to the east end of Santa Croce church. Later, after marrying Theodosia Garrow in 1848, Trollope moved to the Villa Trollope on the Piazza Indipendenza (now a well-known pension, that makes much of the building's literary associations). After the death of his wife, Trollope moved to No. 41, Via del Ponte a Ema, out beyond Porto San Niccolò.

Walter Savage Landor lived for years in Villa Landor, bought by him in 1829. He entertained many English literary men in this handsome villa

on the Fiesolean hill-side. After his death it was bought by Professor Willard Fiske, the Dante scholar and collector. Landor died (1864), not in the villa, but in poor quarters at No. 93, Via della Chiesa.

Mrs. Jameson made many visits to Florence, and in 1857 seemed to be living in No. 92, Via Maggio.

Dickens described, in 1845, looking down on Florence and the villas from Fiesole; probably from the low-walled terrace just below the Franciscan convent.

Fenimore Cooper was in Florence in 1837-38, but his residence is not known.

Charles Lever came in 1847 and lived several years in Villa San Leonardo, on Via San Leonardo, beyond Porta San Giorgio.

Lowell lived in Casa Guidi for some time, and later (1874) he stayed a little while in the Hotel del Nord.

Bryant stayed at the Hotel New York in 1858.

Thomas Gray and Horace Walpole visited Sir Horace Mann in 1739-40 probably on the Lung' Arno, between the Ponte Vecchio and the Ponte Santa Trinità.

Smollett, in 1765, "lodged at Widow Vinini's on Arno."

Byron was in Florence one day in 1817, his first visit, and again for a short time in 1821 with Samuel Rogers. He left no footprints.

Leigh Hunt came to Florence in 1827 and stayed at No. 2 or 4 in Via delle Belle Donne (near Via Tornabuoni), and later in the Piazza Santa Croce,

in the corner house (Nos. 14 to 17), on the left side of it, next the church. He later went out to Maiano to live, and here Hazlitt visited him.

Longfellow lived, in 1828, in a house on the Piazza Santa Maria Novella, close to the church. In 1868 he lived on Lung' Arno, near the Ponte Vecchio.

Mark Twain lived, in 1892-93, in the Villa Viviani, near Settignano. He finished "Pudd'nhead Wilson" here.

In the English cemetery are buried Mrs. Browning, Landor, A. H. Clough, Theodore Parker, and both of Trollope's wives.

As one wanders the streets in search of these houses where men and women of note have lived, the eyes will continually fasten on interesting things. One will note the Dante inscriptions put up everywhere over the city; the Michelangelo "kneeling windows" with their graceful outward curve of flat iron bars that let the inmates survey all the street up and down and underneath them. Swift glimpses through great iron gates reveal the luxuriant courtyards within great houses, and high overhead green branches peer over the roofs from the house-top gardens.

Old Florence, too, will be catching the eyes often by means of an old carved portal or worn window-casing, a wall angle oratorio, or a wrought-iron fanale or torch socket. And oftenest of all, by the coats-of-arms, or stemmi, carved in stone and set into the house-walls over entrances, or high up under the eaves, or more conspicuously on the



wall angles. In the cloister arcades of San Marco monastery, or in the rooms of the Archeological Museum in Via della Colonna, one can get acquainted with the stemmi of the guilds and the great Florentine families; the balls of the Medici, the three daggers of the Rucellai, the rearing lion of the Du-vanzati, the bees of the Pazzi, the great hound creature of the Altoviti, and all the rest. With this knowledge one can go into the streets and people palace after palace and house after house with the families of Old Florence.



"Everywhere the six balls of the Medici appear."

the Magnificent: these names and others come in time to stand out. But for the most part it is simply

Everywhere the six (or more or fewer) balls of the Medici appear. In fact, the more you see of Florence, the more you see the mark of the Medici over it all. They seem to have lived in every house of note; or to have built it or burnt it or done something to it. Over the whole city flits the haunting ghost of this extraordinary family. I say "ghost" of the family, for it is only with some study that certain individuals of it come to dis-sociate themselves as particular personalities. Cosimo the Elder, Lorenzo



“the Medici”; the church of the Medici, the villa of the Medici, the palace of the Medici. An extraordinary family truly, but a no less extraordinary people and extraordinary time that could permit a single family without divine right of royalty or even right of official recognition, without power of name or office or heredity, to hold in its grip for two centuries almost the first city of Italy.

## CHAPTER XVIII

### FLORENTINE SHOPS AND SHOPPING

**I**T must be a very near-sighted man and a quite blind woman who can pass unnoticed the shops of Florence, even in the exaltation of hurrying from gallery to church. And it is a matter of high probability that among the visitors to Florence there is not a single blind woman, even though there may be a few men of limited vision. The shops once seen are easily entered, but once entered are not easily escaped from. For some of the best sights of the city are to be found in precisely these small private collections, where the labels of the objects, in curious numerical cryptograms, seem to hold the observer with an interest only less rapt than that claimed by the curios themselves.

In this briefest of accounts of Florentine shopping, I shall not try to tell of such delightful shop scenes as that afforded us one day when we had taken refuge from a shower in a small hole-in-the-wall place, where we sat on little green-bottomed chairs, having small drinks at three soldi the glass. It was on a crowded street of the *piccoli popolani*, and there went on all during our stay a constant traffic in single candles, matches, cigarettes by twos and threes, long thin cigars by ones, and even halves (!), be-

sides the small drinks already mentioned. The sums exchanged for these commodities varied from one centesimo to fifteen (from a fifth of one to three whole cents!).

Such shops afford a lively entertainment to any one interested in people, but less to one interested in things. But of the jewelry shops of the Ponte Vecchio, the antiquity shops of the Via dei Fossi, the silversmiths of the Borgo San Jacopo, the wood-carving and leather-working places of the Via Guicciardini there is no question of lack of interest. While the lace and embroidery shops of the Lung' Arno and Borg' Ognissanti, the dark abodes of old brass lamps and copper pots in the Via Maggio, and the straw hat booths in the Mercato Nuovo, offer attractions which vie only too strongly for many with the Uffizi and Pitti, with tomb-lined Santa Croce and memory-haunted San Marco.

However, the temporary Florentine should find time—and undoubtedly will—for both pure art and applied art, for both culture and a not unworthy covetousness. For Florence offers to wise shoppers opportunities for the purchase of certain things at marked advantage. And some of these opportunities make such surprisingly small demands on the purse that even the most conscientious \$4-a-day tourist can find place for them in his carefully guarded accounts list.

I am not particularly acquainted with the statistics of Florence's business affairs, but I very much doubt that she has any more important "principal exports" than the accumulations of old coppers and

brasses, hammered silver teapots, tooled leather portfolios, embroidered gowns, and "antique" furniture and jewelry, that find their way to America as "personal effects and worn clothing" in the straining trunks of the returning tourists. If there is anything more wonderful in Florence than her immense richness in treasures of painting and sculpture, architecture and history, it is her immense accumulation of "antiquities" for sale to the passing guest. Whole streets are given up to the antiquity shops, hardly any street but has a few, and then, after you have been thoroughly amazed and dismayed by this surplusage, you are simply stupefied to be led by some resident who knows, up flights of stairs into dark rooms, unadvertised and invisible to the uninitiated, with still other masses of material. Where did it all come from? Where does it all come from? Did the tre-quattro-cinquecento world ever really use all this ornament and bizarrerie?

Well, in truth, probably not! Much of this antiquity is but relative. Some of it dates, too likely, from day before yesterday. Worn holes in the picture frames, a Byzantine outlandishness in the pattern of this necklace, verdigris on the brass, the Silurian appearance of these terra-cottas, are not in themselves indubitable evidences of the absolute verities. And the glib "trecentos" or "cinquecentos" of the polite possessors of all these treasures are no more so. The Via dei Fossi is only too likely to be a "way of ditches" for the enthusiastic but inexpert adventurer into its fastnesses. And the good old tale of the Ponte Vecchio's unvarying

truthfulness has become changed into a more modern one of too nearly opposite complexion.

But all this is not to say that there are not antique antiquities in the *antichità* shops; for there are. All that is necessary is to know the difference between ancient and modern antiquity, and to know how to bring the price of what you want within the measure of your capacity to pay. Do not be ashamed to bargain; indeed, be ashamed not to, for otherwise one will regularly pay more than the dealer expects. Much of the modern antiquity is quite as worth one's interest and money as the ancient. The present-day expert making, after antique designs, of all sorts of furniture, picture frames, metal and wooden bric-a-brac, and especially settings for jewels, allows one to possess all the beauty and grace of the Renaissance patterns for a tithe of the money necessary to own the original.

But there are other good shopping opportunities in Florence besides those in the antiquity shops. For example, in the modern wood-carving, leather-tooling, and silver-working rooms, and in the shops of modern jewelry, and of laces and embroidered linens. And there are some few special products, such as the Bondi hard terra-cottas and the Cantigalli and Ginori majolicas, that merit attention from the house-furnishing shopper. One of the conspicuous advantages in connection with all these is the possibility of having work done to order after your own special design or general fancy, for about the same prices as the stock goods. The silver-workers will execute with enthusiasm, if not with great speed, any

commission you may assign them, and the work will satisfy you. If it doesn't at first, it will be done over and over again with unvarying politeness and apparent delight, until you get just what you want. And this is as true of the workers in patterned leather and the wood-carvers. I wanted a pair of bellows for the fire-place in a seaside bungalow. And the notion seized me of having their wooden sides decorated with carved sea-horses. So I asked our favorite wood-worker of the Via Guicciardini if I could have this fancy carried out.

"But, certainly, if, that is, you will tell me what a horse of the sea is."

My description raised doubts of what a sea-horse really looked like, but not at all of Giorgio's being able to produce a *ritratto* (portrait) in wood, if only the monster would be visualised. I made a little sketch; still doubts. That was all I could do for the day. A few days later I went back. And, lo, a pair of bellows with sea-horses in relief, and of an accuracy that both astonished and more than pleased me. The very fin-rays were numbered to the actuality. An authority could have named the species. How had it been done?

The explanation, given with warrantable pride and enthusiasm, was this: My wood-worker had gone first to the public library and there demanded books of the sea-horses. They were few, and as he perused them and hunted for portraits, unsatisfactory. *Per Dio*, what to do? A thought of genius! he would go to the Museum of Natural History and demand sight of the monster *cavallo del mar*.



To the interested and kindly professor he explained his dilemma, and this heart of gold came to his rescue by placing in his grateful hands a veritable sea-horse, which he should accept as a loan to take to his shop and keep before him as he modeled the *ritratto* in wood. And the sparkling-eyed old man carefully opened a little box and revealed to my eyes the dried form of a mummified sea-horse reposing on a bed of cotton-wool. As I paid over my eleven francs for the bellows—one franc more than the agreed-on price, because of the slight trouble in getting the *ritratto* of an accuracy—I wondered how quickly I should get hardened again to the somewhat different conditions in my own land.

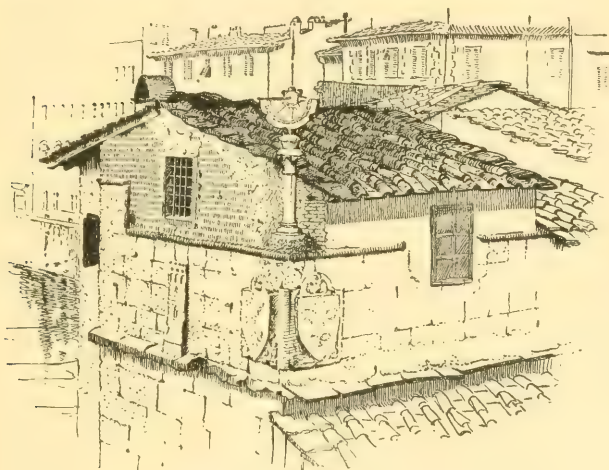
As one walks along the Lung' Arno Acciajuoli in the growing twilight there shine out more and more clearly across the river the leaping lights from the little furnaces of the silver-workers of the Borgo San Jacopo. All along that most picturesque stretch of old houses on the river's verge, from Ponte Vecchio to Ponte Santa Trinità, the dancing little flames flare up and down, while clustered thickly about them are the long-aproned workmen. The shop fronts are on the street next to the river, and for shops they are most primitive and displayless. You step inside, and a workman lays aside his blowpipe or lifts from over his polishing and hears your wants. There are a few heaping trays of rings, spoons, stick-pins, and the like. In a shallow wall-case there are some miscellaneous larger things. But mostly they expect to make you what you want, when and as you want it. You select your stones from the

little piles put before you, find something near the pattern of setting you wish, or sketch it, or describe it to the quick-witted workman, and with a last look at the fascinating table of flames and deft hands and intent eyes, you are out with much bowing and kindly farewells. Your work will all be done by hand at that same crowded table. You may come and see it under way if you like, and if it isn't done quite to your satisfaction, the ever-polite, smiling master of the shop will be the first to suggest doing it all over again. And when finally one of the long-aproned workmen, bare-headed and breathless, brings it to you in your hotel or pension, with the bill and the little present of a Florence lily silver stick-pin stuck through it, you will be almost certainly well-satisfied with the work and the bill.

The more pretentious silver and gold smithing shops are on the Ponte Vecchio, or along the Lung' Arno, and scatteringly elsewhere. And all offer rare opportunities to those who know what they want, and something of how much what they want can be made for. Silver teapots and cream jugs, sugar bowls and cake plates, silver pitchers, carafes, baskets, and what not are made in soft hammered silver, all the work done by hand slowly and lovingly.

It is on the Ponte Vecchio, too, and along the Lung' Arno that the old jewelry and the new jewelry in old designs mostly are. Here are uncounted thousands of uncut stones, and occasional wonder toys like that perfect little Ponte Vecchio bird with moving ivory bill, bobbing head, and flutterings wings, all covered with tiny bits of iridescent

humming-bird feathers, that pops out of a bejeweled gold and silver box and sings to you whenever you spring the cover. Copies of most elaborate antique chains and collars, hair ornaments and bracelets, and the rest, are shown, and to one who knows something of stones and workmanship there are oppor-



On the Ponte Vecchio.

tunities to buy the best work of this kind to be got anywhere.

Less expensive than jewelry, but no less attractive to some eyes, will be the leather and parchment work of the little shops in the Via Guicciardini and elsewhere; book bindings, jewel boxes, card cases, photograph frames, smoking sets, menu and place cards for the table, and a score of other things in beautiful gilt or colored designs on colored leathers or dull white parchment. Here again, as in the wood-carv-

ing and silver-working shops, your own designs, your monogram or crest, your wildest fancies, will be substituted gladly for the stock patterns. It is a kind of shopping in which you do more than choose; you contrive, you plan and design, and deft, skilled hands make your fancies real.

The old furniture and picture frames, for which Florence is famous, exhibit themselves everywhere in the city. The shops are especially good and abundant, perhaps, in the Via Maggio, the Borg' Ognissanti, the Via Guicciardini, and on the Lung' Arno, the favorite tourist shopping quarter. Here, too, as in the more general antiquity shops, one needs to know something of the relative value of age. Unless he be a collector he should unhesitatingly say that he cares nothing for the centuries, but everything for design and quality, for beauty and serviceableness, and buy on that basis alone.

Copper pots in a score of shapes, tall brass olive oil lamps, and a hundred curious kinds of metal pieces, candle-sticks, sword-hilts, and snuff-boxes, thrust themselves insistently on the eye in all the tourist-frequented streets of the river quarters, and in many unexpected places besides. Away out by the Porta Romana are a few very good shops of this guise. Copper pots and brass lamps appeal to very slender purses, indeed. Five francs will get a good pot or a really tall lamp. Five dollars judiciously expended in this line will do wonders.

The two photograph shops whose wares will inevitably form part of the tourist's purchases, are

Alinari's (No. 1, Via Strozzi) and Brogi's (No. 1, Via Tornabuoni).

Few women escape the irresistible appeal of the shops of laces and embroideries. And it would be a pity to do so. For the opportunities are exceptional. The work is admirable, the prices wholly within reason. As much cannot be said for silks and ostrich feathers, which can be got to better advantage in Paris. Nor is Florence the place to get furs. But hand-embroidered linen, batiste gowns, blouses, all lovely filet and embroidered things for the table, and Italian laces in every shape, are perhaps better bargains in Florence than anywhere in Europe. The work is different from that done in Switzerland or France, of course, but in its own way is unexcelled. Much of the revival of the lace industry in Italy is due to the initiative and encouragement of the Queen Mother Margherita, as indeed are many other new beginnings in long-neglected phases of Italian art or industry.

In shopping in Italy, as in all Europe for that matter, a little attention will soon reveal to one that the "bargains" are mostly in labor, not in material. It is the cheapness of human labor that makes Europe cheap, where it is cheap. The wood for the furniture, the cloth for the gowns, the gold and silver for the jewelry, the food for eating, are all about as costly as with us in America; but the handiwork and time, the long hours of skilled or unskilled labor are immensely cheaper. The one thing of which there is plenty in Europe, the thing of which the market is over full, is human labor and human



skill. For one-half the wages of the American cook alone, we had in our villa the devoted and perfect service of cook, maid, and gardener! And this could be almost true of Berlin or Paris. Certainly the German or the French cook and maid would be paid together less, and would work harder and give a more helpful service than the single servant at home. The postman who brings our letters gets seven dollars a month. The conductor on our tram to Florence gets fifty cents a day, and has to make good all losses from bad money received. A day laborer in the village gets sixty cents a day without food, or forty cents with food. And so in the shops of the dressmakers, the silversmiths, and the wood and leather workers; the bargain to the American shopper in Europe comes from the low wage of the workers. It comes, too, of course, from the skill and perfection of the handicraft and from the artistic tradition of the centuries that reveals itself in the taste and fancy of the designer. The American shopper in Florence is getting bargains in human service and human capacity.



## CHAPTER XIX

### HARVEST TIMES

**I**N the last week of June most of the fireflies go, and the cicale begin to sing. This means that the time has come to cut the grain. Perhaps the unmistakable ripening of the fields might serve as well to call for the harvester, but as between the two, let us choose the first guide. It is more in the Italian spirit.

All the tillable country about Florence that is not built on by villas or given over to the flower-gardens, or devoted to walled-in roadways, is grain-field. Grain-field not alone though, but olive and pear and peach and fig orchard, mulberry plantation, vineyard and garden of wild flowers all in one. From tree to tree the grapevines loop their lines that cling to the trunks and spread out over the branches, while underneath them sprout and grow and seed the spears of grain. And among the grain red poppies and wandering crimson clover fleck the green and browning fields with fire. Along the straggling low walls that bound and hold up the terraced field-plots yellow broom and goldenrod lift their glowing blossoms above the standing grain.

The sun shines unobscured all day long now; only soft wispy tresses or scattered curls of white cloud

come into the sky, that each day takes on more unmistakably the Italian blue that poets sing. It is time for the men to come and cut. The cicale call them from early morning to full dusk; the whole air is shrill and vibrant with the incessant rasping reiteration of their song. Across this fugue of the cicala, and into it, are woven the short and varied measures of other insects, the little grylli on the dry ground, the white crickets and green locusts in the trees. And there is also the call of the tree-toad and the chirping song of sparrows. But dominating and outlasting all is the cicale chorus; so unbroken, so universal, so evenly loud and monotonous that one almost forgets it, indeed, really does sometimes, and hears clearly and undisturbed the lesser cries of the other field things. I remember once standing by the ocean trying to talk with an old man, who lived in solitude in a hut on a great cliff against which the surge of the Pacific beat all day and night. I shouted and gesticulated myself weary. Finally, I asked how he could bear it to live all his hours in this welter of noise.

"What noise?" was his innocent question.

When the men come out to cut the grain one notices first of all that they mostly are not men, but women and children. Probably we did not expect to see the great machines we are used to in California, with their twenty-two horses in two long lines abreast, the driver, perched on his high seat at the end of the slender pole reaching out over their backs, bobbing up and down like a kingbird on a wind-tossed spray of apple. We did not, of course,

really expect to see such a machine monster drive into the Settignano fields and through them, cutting, threshing, and dropping the grain behind it in neatly sewn-up sacks. But neither did we expect to see the grain crop of Italy harvested by hand with small curved sickles.

As they stoop, these men and women and children, and cut, and cut, and cut, they gather the fallen spears into little wisps, which they tie around with grass-stems and lay in leaning groups against the tree-trunks, or put into the crotches, to air and cure. As the days pass the wisps grow in number, and the feet of the trees are all clustered round or their arms all filled by the little brown bundles, while fewer and fewer stand the grain stems in the field. And after two or three weeks have gone by of beginning at daylight and finishing at twilight, of bending over and cutting and wisping and tying, the little bundles are all made, and are gathered and taken to the *aja*, the stone or cement threshing floor by the barn.

Here begins the most primitive and most picturesque part of all the harvesting. The men seize the wisps one at a time and beat their grain-filled ends violently against the *aja* floor, or against a stone bench or block, until most of the grains have flown out. Then the women and children take the wisps in hand and go on with the beating; or putting them down on the floor, strike them with sticks until every least seed is garnered. Or at the beginning the wisps are untied and the grain stems spread in a loose layer five or six inches thick over the

center of the stone floor, and then the men and women, standing side by side, beat rhythmically with flails for hours together, chatting or singing a *stornello* as they work. After the grain is thus beaten out the straw is gathered up and piled in neat cocks about central standing poles, while the grain and refuse on the *aja* are swept up into a pile and



"The men seize the wisps one at a time and beat their grain-filled ends violently against the *aja* floor or against a stone bench or block, until most of the grains have flown out."

then sieved and winnowed by hand, and the grain and chaff heaped up in separate little mounds. For days and days under the blue sky and bright sun these toiling, singing, happy groups work on the *ajas*. And then, after their labors here are done, the men go to plowing the fields for sake of the vines and trees with rough wooden plows (*bombero*), drawn by great sleek white oxen, with red tas-

sels and ribbons on their faces; while the women, especially in all the Val d'Arno below Florence, begin to plait the straw into hats. These are the hats that cover the floor and stalls of the New Market in

Florence, and find their way by thousands to America as useful souvenirs.

Besides the wheat (*grano*), a small-eared maize (*gran-turco*), and a kind of millet (*saggina*), are grown in the poderi about Florence, as are also crimson and red clover for forage. The vivid patches of long-headed crimson clover, flowing and rippling in the soft breezes of May and June, are of singular beauty in their setting under the vines and trees. A tall, stiff-stemmed, purple-flowered bean is grown in large quantities, the flattish white seeds of which serve, when freshly gathered, for human food, or, after drying, for horses and cattle. Parts of the poderi are given up to small plots of various vegetables for the kitchen or village market. Most interesting of these are the little green squashes or zucchini, which are the staple vegetable dish all through the summer. These zucchini vary in size and shape from large walnuts to small, thick bananas, three or four inches long, and are always tender and juicy, and most palatable.

The farming land, divided into poderi of various sizes, belongs chiefly to the villa owners, usually men of some wealth, the contadini, or peasants, only rarely owning their own holding. But each contadino family has its own distinct podere to work and care for, doing this under the curious and long-established land tenure system of *mezzeria*, or "half and half." Connected with one villa or under one ownership there may be from one to many poderi, each with its contadino's house and outbuildings and stock, and single, sometimes rather complexly



formed, family. By complex I mean only that it may be composed of married sons or daughters with

their families, or brothers and sisters, uncles and aunts and cousins, all added to the central parental group. There is a head man, or *capoccio*, and head woman, or house-mother (*massaia*), and the rule of these two is rigid. The *padrone* or *podere* owner deals with the *capoccio* alone, and there is evidently a good deal of the protecting lord and master on the part of the *padrone* coupled at the same time with an unusually



A *podere* well.

fine spirit of self-control and independence on the part of the *contadino* and peasant.

"Theoretically," writes Mrs. Janet Ross, herself a large owner of *poderi*, and a practical "lord and master" of a dozen or more *contadini* families, "theoretically, *mezzeria* is the equal division between landowner and peasant of everything the soil produces. The former brings the capital, the latter gives the labor. Every *podere* or farm, the size of which varies considerably in different parts of Tuscany (from 8 to 30, or even 40 acres), has on it a house, stable, and outbuildings, for which the peasant pays no rent. The necessary oxen, cows, horses, or donkeys, are paid for by the landlord,



and all gain or loss on them is divided between him and the peasant. Every month the capoccio brings his book to be written up by the landlord or his factor, and half of whatever money he has cashed for milk, vegetables, fruit, and other minor products. Grain, pulse, wine, and oil are divided in kind, the landlord providing the necessary machinery for pressing oil and wine, and the vats for the fermentation of the grapes. If silkworms are reared, the cocoons are sold by the landlord, who either pays the peasant his half share, or passes it to his credit in the books, which are audited once a year by a certified accountant, who reads over the items of debit and credit to each contadino in the presence of the padrone, and then appends his signature. Many of the peasants can neither write nor read, but their memory is unfailing, and the slightest mistake is instantly corrected."

That silkworms are among the domestic animals cared for on many of the poderi, the many mulberry trees growing in the grain fields and vineyards are plain evidence. Indeed, it will be only by the sight of these trees, the outward and visible sign of the indoor undertaking, that the casual observer can know that silken cocoons form a part of the annual produce of the farms. But if he can obtain permission of entrance from Sig. Cocchi, or some other proprietor of a *filanda* (silk-reeling establishment), near Florence, he can verify by his own amazed eyes the fact that millions of silkworms are fed and cared for every spring by the Tuscan contadini.

In Cocchi's *filanda* in Rifredi, which we visited,

we saw more millions of cocoons piled in great heaps on sliding trays one above the other, up to the high ceiling of the store-rooms, than we believed there could ever be silkworms enough to spin. And this was only one unwinding and winding up place among the hundreds of Italy! There were seventy girls and women tending the machines there and working with amazing skill and speed at softening and cleaning away the loose floss, and finding the real thread ends, and unwinding, five or six at a time, the funny little bobbing and whirling cocoons in their hot water bath. The spindles and jigging things of the machines were all whirring like mad, while on them grew the beautiful masses of smooth, shining, golden, silken thread. And every now and then the woman would take her shining mass and carry it to put with others, to make a single great heavy skein that another machine twisted tight and firm into the final, long, heavy braid in which the raw silk comes to the factories.

But before the silk can be unwound from the cocoons in the filanda it has to be made and spun by the silkworms. And that is so long a story that I cannot tell it here, as interesting and fascinating as it may be. It is the story of the silk in the contadino house, in the attic or cellar, if it is airy enough, or in the room right next the living-room, if necessary. The silkworms are not reared in a few big establishments or nurseries in Italy, as one might expect, and as would probably be done in America if we could ever rear them at all, but scattered among almost all the poderi, among all the

contadini of the silk-raising sections. Each contadino gets some tested "seed" (eggs), that have been examined by experts to see that they are not tainted by the fatal *pebrine*, the disease that Pasteur taught silk-growers how to combat—and with the unfolding of the mulberry leaves in the spring, spreads these eggs out on a little tray in a well-aired, fairly light, and warm room. They soon hatch out their minute larvæ, or caterpillars, the whitish, naked, 16-legged, strong-jawed silkworms, which demand immediately cut-up bits of tender, fresh mulberry leaf. They eat with an appetite incredible. Fifty centuries of domestication and cultivation have made the silkworm a nearly helpless stay-in-its-place, eating and turning-what-it-eats-into-silk machine. Part of what it eats goes to nourish the rapidly growing caterpillar, and part goes to make the viscous silk-fluid that accumulates in two long, contorted glands in its body.

When the worms are full-grown they cease their audible munching of the mulberry leaves—munching that they have only interrupted temporarily four or five times for their moultings—and become restless. For the first time they seem to evince an interest in the world beyond their trays. But they are easily satisfied. Bunches of twigs or straws placed standing in their trays attract them, and they climb up into them a little way and soon cease their slight attempts at foreign travel. They begin to spin silk. At first an irregular, loose skein of threads, inclosing them in a thin web much larger than the cocoon will be, and then, inside this, the real symmetrical

compact cocoon, all made of a single, continuous thread almost a quarter of a mile long. The silk comes from the inner glands out of a tiny hole in the lower lip of the caterpillar, and hardens from a fluid to a solid as it issues. The worm, standing with the forward part of its body lifted, turns and twists its head around and around, drawing the silken thread in lines, first criss-cross and irregular all about it, and then in regular, sweeping curves, hundreds of times repeated to make the thick cocoon. A habit which existed formerly purely for the sake of the protection of its own inert body while undergoing the change from caterpillar through chrysalid to moth, has been so developed under man's selecting care that it is magnified out of all proportion to the creature's necessity.

So all the bunches of twigs blossom with thick-set golden and white flowers of silk. And these flowers, when plucked and sent in basketfuls to the filanda, are what one sees filling the cool, dark store-rooms there. But a sad thing has to happen before the cocoons go into the unwinding rooms. And that is the killing of the yet unborn moths inside. As mummy-like brown chrysalids the silkworms are slowly changing to moths. As soon as one becomes a moth, it is ready to come out. This it does, or would do if allowed to, by dissolving and cutting away one end of the cocoon by means of a special fluid and apparatus it has for just this purpose. But this would break the long, continuous silk thread into hundreds of short pieces, which is not at all what the silk-workers want. And so all the millions of

cocoons are put as soon as they come to the *filanda* into great ovens, where they are heated to a temperature sufficient to kill the developing moths within them. All, that is, except a few extra large and finely colored ones, from which the moths are allowed to issue to mate and lay eggs—the “seed” for next year’s silk crop.

All the time since the grain harvest, the sun and showers, the soft airs and faithful soil have been preparing another harvest for the *contadini* of the *poderi*. In September and early October the vines are ready to be despoiled of their treasure, their hanging *grappoli* of black and red and white *uva*. The vintage used to be a fine festival in Tuscany. The picking of the grapes and their pressing, the fermenting of the juices, the tasting of the fresh wine, were occasions of singing and merry-making and joyful anticipations of the good returns of the thousands of liters of pure wine. Italy is second only to France in its output of wine, over 700,000,000 gallons a year. But in the last few years the price of the simple, unblended, untreated Italian wine has fallen so low that the *contadini* and *poderi* owners are greatly discouraged. In the Casentino (the beautiful valley of upper Arno, just over the Val-lombrosan hills from Florence), a fiasco of wine can be purchased for from two to five cents. Some of the Casentinese *contadini* this season actually seriously considered letting the grapes rot on the vines rather than go to the labor of picking and pressing them. So the vintage in Tuscany, and for that matter all over Italy, has lost much of its festival char-



acter. Yet it is still thoroughly picturesque to the foreigner, and worth going to some trouble to see.

About Florence and in the valley of the lower Arno the grapes ripen and are gathered in September; but in the Casentino, along the upper stretches of the river, the vintage does not begin until about the tenth of October. The autumn colors, wonderful flame and gold, have come to the beeches and chestnuts of the Apennine forests, then; the ways to Camaldoli and La Verna are delights ineffable to the color-hungering eyes; and the air is crisp in the early morning and full of the autumn melancholy through the day. The great casks or vats and the wooden bigonie are overhauled, new staves put in, and new bands put on where needed; shears and curving knives are sharpened and all made ready for the day of beginning.

The Italian vintage has been often described. It is losing its picturesqueness because it has lost much of its joy. But the same slow white oxen, with their red face-tassels, move along the country roads with their cartloads of casks filled with partly pressed grapes. The same groups of men, women, and children swarm about the vines with their curved knives and shears, releasing the fragrant, colored masses from their mother stems. The same overflowing baskets carried again and again to the waiting bigonie; the same pervading, exciting odor of bruised grapes and already fermenting juice in all the air; all these signs of the vintage, characteristic and familiar since the days of Virgil, are still to be en-



joyed by any countryside visitor to Italy in the autumn.

In the wine-sheds, where the real pressing and the fermenting go on, the fragrance is almost overpowering. How the men who press the grapes in the bigonie with thick-headed wooden clubs, or the boys who still sometimes tramp vigorously with bare legs on the oozy mass in the great casks, or they who pour and carry the red fluid from cask to cask, manage to escape an intoxication from the pungent odor alone is beyond comprehension. I but ventured into one such bacchanal and came out reeling.

At the same time as the harvest of the grapes, so long and expensively prepared for and with such problematical results, another harvest is ready—one that has demanded no care or attention to make ready. It is a harvest especially for the contadini and the little people of the city, and to enjoy its fruits they have only to garner them. The chestnuts that have been falling noisily in the forests of the Apennines have but to be picked up and carried home to add no little to the food stock of the poorer Italian people.

These chestnuts are made into a sweetish but palatable and nourishing flour by the peasants of the mountains. They are roasted and eaten by the working-people of the towns with meals as dessert, or between meals as we eat candies. They are made into great circular pies, of which slices are sold on the streets in all the poorer quarters. Made into puddings and stuffed into fowls they are served in all the middle-class homes and in the pensions and

hotels. And, finally, they are saturated with sugar syrup and become, as *marrons glacés*, the *bonnes bouches* of the wealthy. Thus the useful chestnut finds its welcome way into the mouths of all Italy and her guests.

From May till the end of the year the olives have been hanging on the trees, first as tiny green buttons, then slowly, very slowly, getting thicker and longer, really olive-shaped, and finally turning from green to brown and brown to blackish. In November and December is gathering and oil-making time. As Florence is entirely surrounded by olive orchards, as all the hill-sides up to the very crests are silver-white with the breeze-tossed leaves of thousands of trees, olive harvest can be enjoyed by any visitor by simply driving out of the city to the nearest poderi.

The odd growth habit of the trees—a habit forced on them by their master, man—will first attract the attention. The trunks are scarred and hewn by the knives of the caretakers in their eradication of pests; the branches are few and slender, springing curiously slight and irregular from the abrupt, broad summit of the trunk, and there are few or no middle or interior branches; there are only angularly radiating outer ones. The berries are thick, though, upon these. The curious shape and aspect of the tree is all the result of the radical pruning and opening out necessary to expose the berries freely to the sun and to limit their number and thus determine a common good quality.

In the picking the utmost care is used not to bruise the fruit. Fallen and bruised berries are kept sepa-

rate from the others, and go to make an oil of second quality. I was told recently by an importer of Spanish and Italian oils that the olive-growers of America—and that means the olive-growers of California—are not careful enough in their picking and handling, and hence only in exceptional cases produce oil of the quality of the European product. The pressing is done by having an ox roll a heavy millstone around on the berries in a great stone basin. Mrs. Ross describes the process as follows:

“In the center was an immense stone basin, in which revolved a solid millstone about five feet in diameter, technically called, I believe, an edge-runner, turned by a splendid white ox, which, to our astonishment, was not blindfolded. Our host told us that it was difficult to get oxen to do this work; it takes time and patience to accustom them to it. The millstone was set up on edge and rolled round in the stone basin, secured to a big column of wood which reached to the ceiling. The whole machine was most old-fashioned and clumsy, and the padrone said, laughing, evidently as old as Noah’s Ark. Into the stone basin, as clean as a dairy-maid’s pan, five sacks of olives were emptied which, in a short time, were reduced to a mass of dark greenish-brown thick pulp. Stones and all were mashed with but little noise, save the occasional lowing of the ox when his tasseled and ornamented nosebag was empty. When Bencino judged that the olives were sufficiently crushed, the pulp was taken out from the mill, with clean new wooden shovels, and put into a circular shallow basket, with a large hole through

the middle, made of thick cord fabricated from rushes grown in the Pisan marshes, and looking very much like open cocoanut matting. As fast as these *gabbie*, or cages, were filled two men carried them on a hand-barrow to the press in the corner of the room, and piled one on the top of the other under the press. Then began the hard work. Two huge posts were clamped with an iron support, a colossal beam through which goes the screw, finishing below in a large square block of wood with two square holes right through it. Into one of these Carlo stuck a long beam, to which he hooked a rope, the other end of which was secured round a turning pillar of wood some six or eight feet distant, with a handle against which the men threw their whole weight. With many groans and squeaks the big block of wood revolved to the right until all the rope was twisted round the pillar; then it was unhooked, the beam was lifted out of its hole in the block and carried on Carlo's stalwart shoulder to be inserted into the next hole, and the rope again hooked round the end of the beam; this process continued until not a drop more of oil could be extracted. The press was then screwed back, the *gabbie* carried on the hand-barrow to the mill, where they were emptied, and their contents again ground; then they were filled, and put under the press for the second time, when more oil came dripping out, but of inferior quality. The refuse that remains, called *sausa*, is almost black, and quite dry and gritty. This is sold for threepence or fourpence a *bigoncia* full, about 55 pounds in weight, for making soap."

As the olive is two-thirds water and one-third oil, the result of the pressing is a liquid mass of oil and water. The oil rising to the top, however, is readily skimmed off and poured into receptacles that are transferred to a room of equable temperature, where the oil is allowed to ripen and clear. It is then ready for market.

With this I must make an abrupt end of Italy's harvest times. They are all beautifully Italian in their spirit; they are festivals as well as labors. They are the suggestion and the opportunity for song and praise of Nature, as well as the occasion and necessity for long hours of work. For Italy sings as she works—it is her inherited philosophy. We who weep and burn and curse as we struggle will never understand it. We may even profess a contempt for it, but we might do better to admire and envy it. At heart most of us do.

## CHAPTER XX

### FLORENTINE EXCURSIONS

#### I. VALLOMBROSA AND OVER THE CONSUMMA PASS

**T**HERE are certain excursions that the visitor to Florence makes quite as a matter of course. Besides the ones to Fiesole and the Certosa, he goes to Vallombrosa of the many leaves.

One day on the Settignano train, in a warming week in June, I overheard the redder faced of two perspiring men in the car say to the other: "I am going out to Vallombrosa"; and he thereupon arose and went out to the front platform. Here he stood with hat in hand and seemed to get cooler. His remark was a metaphor of the street, for Vallombrosa is one of the cooling-off places for the Florentines. Viareggio on the sea near Pisa is another, and besides there are the many hotels and pensions perched high in the Pistojesse Mountain. To the tourist, however, Vallombrosa is a Mecca to visit, for the sake of the blind poet who made it famous in two lines, and for the opportunity of seeing the old monastery of the mountain-side in its beautiful forest setting.



The going and returning are not the least interesting or beautiful parts of the pilgrimage. The long, slow, ever-ascending drive from S. Ellero (a station on the Florence to Rome railway), or the quicker, cheaper, and less dreamful ascent by funicular, is a mountain climb of much ease and generous reward. First, orchards and vineyards, then woods and streams, and always the changing views of the winding Arno and its valley-floor and bounding hills and mountains. And if the day be a little misty or one of chasing clouds these views may remain the most pleasing memory of the whole excursion. The funicular ends at an unattractive hotel village (Saltino), standing out new and raw on a naked projecting shoulder of the Protomagno. But the carriage road winding along the mountain-side for a mile or more to the monastery is very beautiful. Even more beautiful, and better shaded and quieter, is the footpath. There is a hotel or two at the monastery itself. In fact, Vallombrosa is obviously a resort, and as much as you are disturbed by such obviousness so much less is Vallombrosa now the joy it must have been to earlier visitors.

The monastery's foundation goes back nearly ten centuries, but its present buildings are only about four hundred years old, and they serve science in one of its practical undertakings; one, however, that promotes beauty as well as utility. The principal Italian governmental school and experimental station of forestry is now housed by the old convent. In rooms where once the gray-gowned monks muttered their paternosters and pondered the mysteries of

heaven and hell, young men now squint through microscopes, test the strength of woods, and note the characteristics of noxious insects and fungi. The old library room, too, houses very different shelves of tomes; and in place of holy bones and bits of the true cross, long cases of stuffed birds, dried plants, and polished woods are the guarded treasures of the house.

Outside the buildings on the mountain slopes are acres of nurseries, with their lines of infant trees in measured plots under cryptogramic labels. It is incontestable that Italy needs schools of forestry, trained foresters, and cared-for forests, much more than monasteries, monks, and cloister gardens, but to the tourist pilgrim to Vallombrosa, with soul properly attuned by Milton and Lamartine, there must come regret and a sigh, perhaps, that helpful science has had to replace picturesque religion at just this spot of consecrated earth.

Vallombrosa's founding and the establishment of its monastic order came about through the active penitence of that Giovanni Gualberto, whose memory is otherwise made sacred to us by the mutilated remains (in the Bargello) of Bernardo da Rovezzano's masterpiece of decorative sculpture. It was to this profligate scion of a noble Florentine house that the Christ head on the crucifix, now inclosed in the little Michelozzo chapel in San Miniato, bowed in approving recognition of his generosity when he prayed before it in the old Benedictine abbey on Miniato mount in 1018. This sainted Giovanni—then, however, by no means a saint—came to

his prayer fresh from having spared his brother's murderer, whom a just hazard of fortune combined with an active personal search had put into his power. And in counter recognition of the miracle of the crucified image, what less could the noble young gentleman of Florence do than establish a monastery and hermitage, and found an order of monks to use them? And so it all came about as it did.

In later years the monastery and order, having grown more rich in properties and compensatingly less rich in piety, came to be talked about with the tongue of scandal. And it may be as well that a practical-minded government interfered to dispossess the monastic culture of religion in favor of the scientific culture of forests. The dropping winds that come over the trees of Vallombrosa down to us in distant Florence can henceforth never bring with them aught but the whisperings of the spirit from God's true tabernacle and the healing balsam that distils from His complete immanence in Nature.

Vallombrosa may be visited as a station on the over-mountain way to the Casentino. It is not exactly on the main highroad from Florence by Pontassieve and the Consuma Pass into the valley; but the main road can readily be reached from it by a beautiful drive of a few miles along the mountain-side. This drive is all the way through forests and high meadows and pastureland, and is so fragrant with its smells of spruce and larch, and so rich in its reaching views of Tuscan hill and valley that it should be made as a part of the Vallombrosan excursion, even though the Casentino be not at the time

an objective point. Near where the road joins the Casentino highway, a few rods short of Consuma village, the great dome of Florence, with the dim expanse of gray-red roofs huddling about it, is visible. And one sees from here how closely the city is held in the protecting embrace of the hills that ring her round.

The Casentino can be reached by an all-rail route by means of a little narrow-gauge road that branches off from the Florence-Rome main line at Arezzo, and runs up through the heart and into the very head of the valley. But immensely more rewarding is the driving way over the mountain. It is not only the out-of-doors fresh air and odors, and the close intimacy with the things and people of the roadside, that one gains by this way of going, but the panoramic unrolling and bird's-eye view of the Casentino from the summit of the mountain pass. One sees the whole of the vine-set valley with the poplar-lined Arno meandering down its middle, the villages nestling, like Stia and Pratovecchia, in the river-bed, or perched, like Poppi and Bibbiena, on the summits of their isolated hills, the ragged walls and crumbling towers of the castle ruins on their giant sentry rocks, and guarding this fairyland away from the noisy world outside, the high, rough mountain rim all around it. Your eyes grow big as the enchanting scene fills them, and then wet and misty for very pain of its beauty; your heart leaps with the thought of entering into the peace and simple joy of it all. For a tired body and a sore heart there can be no panacea of more promise of certain

healing than the Casentino seen from anywhere on its mountain ring under the Italian sky of summer. In truth, did not that frailest and sometimes saddest of men, Francis of Assisi, find his most comforting hours up there at La Verna? And the heart-sore exiled Dante have forgetful days of peace as he wandered along the Arno in the valley's depths?

One can begin the day's drive from Florence itself, or save a little time for more leisurely covering the mountain part of the road by taking train to Pontassieve, and then carriage from there. The Pontassieve drivers make the most of their advantage when confronting a casual traveler, bundled off with bag and baggage into the forlorn little station. It is advisable to arrange definitely for a carriage before coming. There are drivers in the Casentino who will be glad to come over the mountain and meet you at the station; or probably the Pontassieve men will be reasonable if they do not have you so entirely at their mercy as they had us. There is, indeed, a little diligence that meets one of the trains from Florence in the early afternoon, and gets over before night. But its cheapness is its chief recommendation.

The road out of Pontassieve crosses the Sieve by a picturesque ponte (hence the village name) almost immediately, and begins its white and dusty uphill windings among olives and vines and through scattered little hamlets. As we jogged on we had constantly to meet and make a noisy way through flocks of sheep and goats, which were being driven down from the mountains to follow the Arno for many



miles, and finally find pastures for the winter in the marshes of the Maremma. It was now only the beginning of October, but winter comes early in the mountains. Already the vineyards along the road were more yellow and red than green, and only a few scattered, drying bunches of grapes that had ripened too late for pickers, still clung to the vines. This troubled us a little, for we had been most anxious to see the Tuscan vintage.

On our return from a trip into the Tyrol and Dolomites we had found the grapes about Florence already gathered and pressed. But we had been reminded that the vintage in such a mountain valley as the Casentino would be later, and so we had waited only long enough to unpack our trunks and repack our bags before starting over the mountains. Our youthful, politely loquacious driver reassured us. The grapes hereabout had all been gathered, yes, but over there, and he waved his whip generously to half the world, the *vendemmia* had not yet begun. And the vineyards were very beautiful in the Casentino. We should see things to remember.

Along the roadside and inclosing the vineyards on either side ran a low stone wall, with its rough coping covered with thorny vines held down by heavy stones. This was a primitive but effective arrangement to guard the grapes against the barefooted children of the roadway. In one great vineyard that we passed, too, there was a curious high scaffolding, with a sort of little straw-hut built on its top. This was the abode of a lookout, who perched aloft there through all the season of ripe grapes.

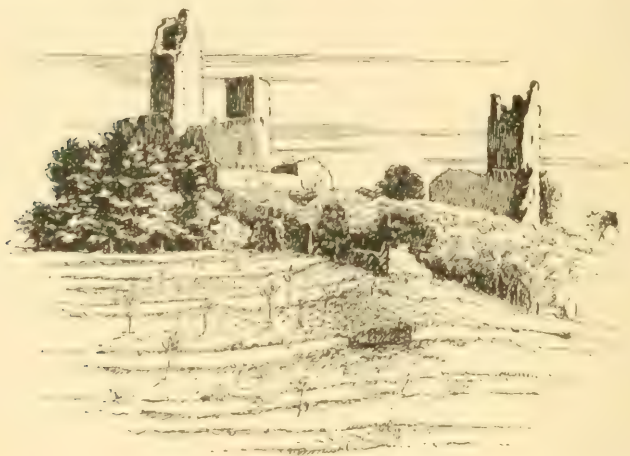


Evidently the children of Italy need more encouragement to be honest than is given them by the numerous roadside shrines. In this vineyard teams of great white oxen were already at the fall plowing. On every contadino's house along the road hung split tomatoes and figs in long chains, or festoons, drying in the sun. Sometimes, instead of being strung in chains, they were impaled on little twigs arranged together to form a many-branching tree. Here and there along the way we met or overtook peasants carrying loads of branches on their backs, and at a sharp turn in the road we came upon three buxom young women in animated gossip. Each had on her back an enormous load of leafy oak branches, and as they stood close together resting their strapped-on burdens against the stone wall they looked to be utterly overwhelmed under the great masses. They glanced up at us smiling, and their fresh red faces and big clear eyes gave no indication of the ravages that a few more years of such excessive labor were sure to bring.

The hours sped quickly with the simple adventures of the way, and soon we were driving with all the necessary great clatter of whip-snapping and swift pounding of hoofs into the bleak, gray little village of Consuma, near the summit of the pass. It is a squalid alpine nest of charcoal burners. We counted twenty-four of the tenuous wisps of smoke rising from their fires in the forests of the upper slopes, and along the single village street most of the lounging men had faces and arms as black as those of chimney-sweeps. The road winds about for some

distance on the bare, wind-swept summit of the pass, but finally, passing an old chapel, picturesquely set about with firs, where a Florentine army once camped on its way over the mountains to ravage the Casentino, it begins its swift drop into the fairy lowland.

When the eyes are sated for a moment with the wonderful stereoscope and its mountain rim, they be-



"The relics of Romena."

gin to search out details. To the left, conspicuous on isolated hill summits, are the jagged pinnacles of two ruined castles. These are the relics of Romena and Porciano, in the old days two of the principal strongholds of the Conti Guidi, those noble gentlemen and freebooters who lorded it for so many generations over all the Casentino. The story of their fortunes and misfortunes, their loves and fraternal hates, is the human history of the valley.

When the Florentine Republic finally dispossessed them and tore down their hilltop castle fortresses, as an incident to its struggle with the warring bishops of Arezzo, to whom the Conti Guidi stood in a loose connection of fiefdom, it ended romance for the Casentino.

But not beauty and picturesqueness. Inhabited to-day only by simple villagers and *contadini*, with a small but ominous beginning of factory workers along the banks of the power-producing streams, the valley has yet all it ever had of natural beauty, and has this enhanced by the addition of well-kept fields and vineyards over all its lower acres. As our carriage rattled swiftly down to the tilled land we stared in surprise to see what seemed to be orchards of low or young trees become vineyards. For the Casentino vines are trained to grow on *pioppi*, small trees pruned to have low, broad, thick heads. The vines climb up the trunks and spread out under the thick foliage of the trees, which protect them from hail and heavy rains. From a little distance the vineyards seem like orchards of small, thick-headed trees bearing heavy bunches of red and white and black grapes.

The fields (down in the flat land along the Arno) look like the rectangular spots in a vividly colored checkerboard. The stream has a narrow border of planted poplars on either bank, so that the shifting silver thread of water seems flanked by long processions of tall, feather-crowned marchers. Up on the slopes of the encircling mountains the vineyards give way to forests, first oak and chestnut, and then

still higher, and running up to the crest and the summits of the irregular peaks, dark close-set firs.

At the head of the valley is the great mass of



“The Casentino vines are trained to grow on *pioppi*, small trees pruned to have low, broad, thick heads.”

Falterona, highest of the mountain summits, and nourishing mother of the Arno. Against the horizon, straight across the valley, is the curious cliffy ridge of the Penna, with the V-shaped cleft in which

lies famous La Verna. We make out where Camaldoli is by the vivid autumnal copper-red of its glorious beech forest. At our feet is Borgo alla Collina, with its great stone gateway and castle-like palace of Landini, "celebrated commentator of Dante." Below Borgo lies the field of Campaldino, scene of the greatest of Casentino battles, that one in which the poet Dante became a warrior. Beyond it rises the steep hill of Poppi, with its restored castle and tower; and still farther, seen dimly near the foot of the valley, are the similar hill and village of Bibbiena, origin of that gay, verse-writing cardinal of the court of Leo X, whose friendship for Raphael was requited by the wonderful portrait of the Pitti.

## II. IN THE CASENTINO

We lived at Poppi; and should we ever go back into the Casentino we should live again at Poppi. It is central, the whole valley is in view from it, it has the one really preserved castle in the region, it is itself a picturesque village, and, finally, it has a comfortable lodging-place, the pension Conti Guidi. They gave us there large, airy rooms, our breakfasts and luncheons under a blossoming arbor in the garden, and to care for us a maid named Concetta, who was more of the joy of living compressed into one person than we can hope ever to know again. Facing our garden gate was the great brown block of a castle, with its high, square tower; while at our free disposal was the ancient castle *prato*, of old a free jousting ground and now a little



quiet place of grass and a few old trees, with the warm sun splashing down through their branches. Some old men and women and a half-dozen playing children were usually on the scattered benches, and in one corner near the castle was a smoothed place



"Facing our garden gate was the great brown block of a castle [Poppi] with its high square tower."

for "bowls," busy every afternoon and all day Sunday. And from every way but the narrow town side was a breath-taking view out over the green and brown and lavender valley to the purple mountain horizon.

From Poppi we made our excursions on foot along the dusty roads, with shepherds and sheep and heavy oxen for company; or by fragrant paths through the fields and vineyards; or by the wind-

ing way along the tree-lined shallow river. Occasionally we drove in a bouncing little carriage to the more distant places, like Camaldoli and La Verna. Or we could go down the hill to the station at its foot and take the toy railway train with its little parlor compartments to either end of the valley,



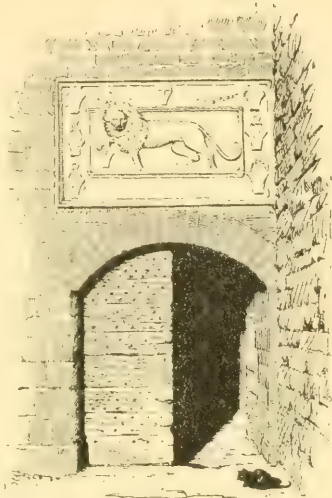
and then tramp back. In the soft moonlit evenings we loitered in the old castle court listening half fearfully for ghostly noises from the banquet hall overhead or the dungeon cells below.

When the great fair was held at Bibbiena we went to it and bought a green umbrella.

When the vintage came we joined the pickers on one of our landlord's *poderi*, where Rowena picked and sang by Concetta's side. The Casentino days were wonderfully good days, every one of them. They filled our nostrils and lungs

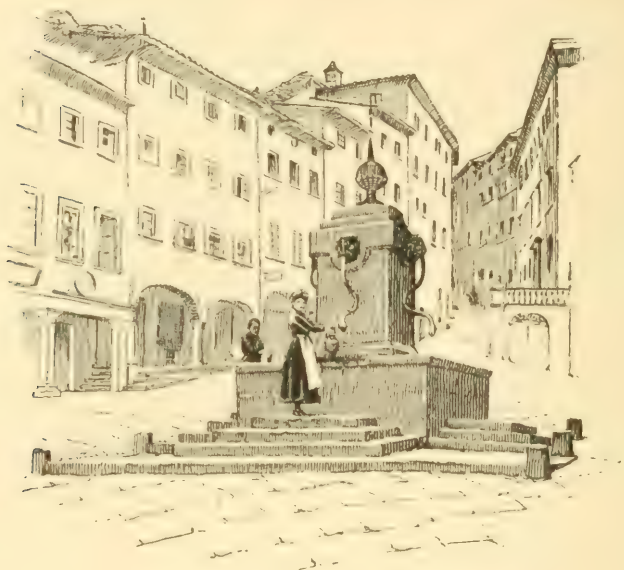
with a tingling air fresh from the mountain forests. They were of the kind that one dreams back to in fireside reveries.

Someway it is Nature that has the upper hand with one in the Casentino. And yet there are rewards for the picture hunter. At Stia, in the head of the valley, at Strada on the Solano, and on the hill near Romena are some old twelfth century churches. The special interest in them all is the crude carving of the capitals of the interior supporting columns. In Stia these capitals bear curious beasts with tails wrapped about them, a mer-



The entrance to Poppi Castle.

maid Eve, and other strange and monstrous figures. In the restored and picturesque Chiesa della Pieve about a half-mile from the gaunt ruin of Romena Castle are more of these fantastic sculptures, while



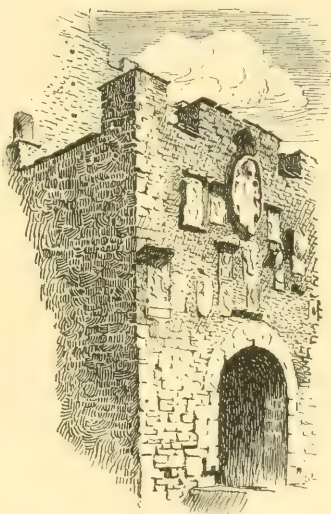
A street fountain in Stia.

in the little Chiesa di San Martino a Vado, near Strado, on the highroad (left) from Borgo alla Collina, they are especially naïve. There are twelve pillars or columns in this church, low, heavy, and bulging in the center, and the capitals are all different. Almost all show crude leaf (lotus?) designs together with distorted animal or human figures. There are rams, grinning lions, monstrous winged

things, and a man on horseback with his feet touching the ground. The pulpit pillar has four human figures on the faces and four more on the angles. The parts of the figures are grossly and comically out of proportion. All these churches were founded in the twelfth century, or perhaps latter half of the eleventh, probably by the Countess Matilda, a conspicuous figure in early Casentino history. Her church building was her act of penitential piety, *pro remedio animæ*, and the strange half-pagan carvings characteristic of them may express the personal fancy of the sturdy countess herself, or perhaps that of her architect-builder.

Their special significance ought to be a pretty problem for the antiquary.

In these churches, as in several others in the valley, pictures of more or less interest are to be found. The Casentino possesses also an unusual abundance of colored terra-cottas in the della Robbia manner. Indeed, at La Verna, where these terra-cottas are particularly numerous, some of the pieces are undoubtedly from the hands of the della Robbias them-



The gate tower of Poppi Castle.

selves, and include certain unusually large and two, at least, unusually beautiful, ones.

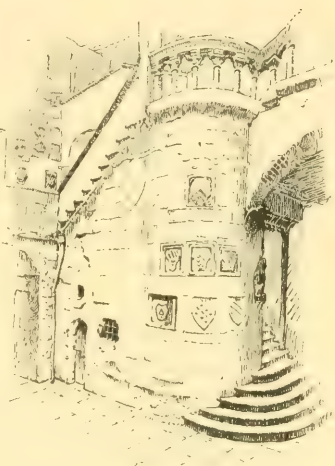
Of the castle ruins five are especially notable, namely, those of Porciana, near Stia; Romena, near Pratovecchia; San Niccolò, near Strada; Montemignajo, above Strada, and the better preserved and now largely restored structure at Poppi. Each of these is on a hilltop, and all, as well as others now totally destroyed, were strongholds of the Conti Guidi. To make these old castle walls and towers real, one should know something of the extraordinary family that provided for so long the feudal lords of the Casentino. From the eleventh century until 1440 the Casentino was a true feudal province, under the rule of the successive heads of the Guidi family. The Conti Guidi reached an extraordinary pitch of grandeur and power, holding besides their eight or nine castles in the Casentino, palaces and fortresses in Florence and elsewhere. They became allied by marriage with other powerful families of northern Italy; and the story of their wars and intrigues and loves, their display and arrogant pretension, their internecine troubles, and final complete overthrow by the Florentine Republic is a fascinating tale. Ella Noyes's "The Casentino and Its Story" tells enough of this for the casual visitor. The student will want something more *eingehend* and better documented. Thus prepared, the visitor will hear from these rugged fragments of massive wall and lifting tower echoes of their old life; he will catch glimpses of their ancient pageantry and glory.

The castle at Poppi is now being slowly but in-

telligently and honestly restored at the expense of the city of Florence. Its court, though much smaller, is comparable in beauty and rough grace with that of the Florentine Bargello. Indeed, the designer of the Bargello court is said to have caught his inspiration from this smaller one of Poppi. The

angling stair and pillared rail, the stemmi on the walls, and the open balcony above are simply magnified and modified in the Bargello. The unusual shape and massive high walls of the castle, its strong crenelations on walls and tower, its subterranean prisons and great cisterns, its old well in the courtyard, the bit of remaining moat and stone bridge, the jousting and dueling ground in front, and its bold, dominating situation on the summit and verge of the steep hill-slope, all combine to make the Poppi stronghold a fascinating relic of the rough but picturesque feudal days of Italy.

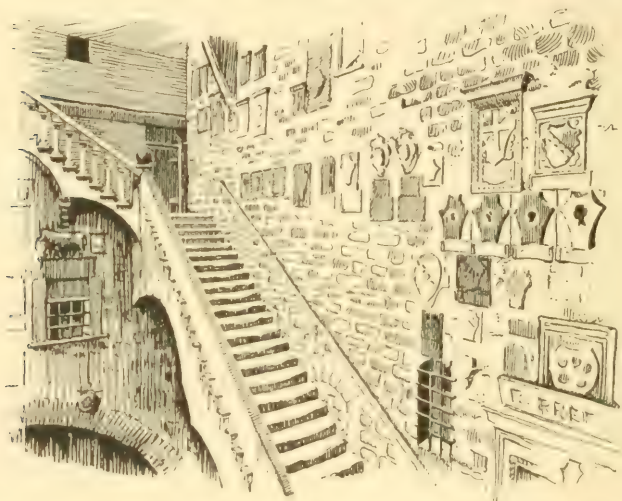
It has memories, too, of other days than warring ones, and of other knocks at its gate than those of besieging enemies. Dante was the guest here of the Countess Battifolia from the summer of 1310 to



The court of Poppi Castle, "though much smaller, is comparable in beauty and rough grace with that of the Florentine Bargello."



the end of the spring of the following year, if the zealous historians of the Casentino can prove their contention. And here he shall have written "*il celebre e sublime canto XXXIII dell' Inferno.*" Less celebrated and sublime, but with a human touch withal, is the verse carved in the stone of the outer



"The angling stair and pillared rail, the stemmi on the walls and the open balcony" of the court of Poppi Castle.

wall to the right of the entrance and over a suggestively small, dark, heavily-barred window :

*"Non per veder questa tomba ripiena,  
Ma per pietà di povere persone,  
Qui fece fare una nuova prigione  
Il cavalier Francesco da Romena." \**

\* Not with the wish to see the dungeon filled,  
But out of pity for its wretched ones,  
The cavalier Francesco da Romena  
Erected a new prison on this site.



This good deed was done in 1649, and the "new prison" was doubtless provided with all modern comforts!

From Poppi hill one looks through the shimmering air straight down the Arno to Bibbiena, perched also on the tip-top of an isolated hill, rising like a great sugar loaf from the river's bed. The day before the vintage was to begin all Casentino came to Bibbiena to buy and sell and visit together. Shoes



"Past contadinos' houses all hung over with drying gold and orange corn."

and pigs, woolens and oxen, umbrellas and bleating sheep, new tools for the farmyard, new casks for the wine-shed, colored kerchiefs for feast-days; all things useful and ornamental to the Casentinese were bargained for in Bibbiena this day. And between bargainings, the red wine washed down the fried cakes and macaroni.

We went to the fair in the afternoon, by a devious narrow lane, along the hill-side among vineyards, and past contadinos' houses all hung over with drying

gold and orange corn and purple-brown millet heads. The way dropped gradually down from Poppi hill to the river level, and here we gained the path under the poplars along the water's edge. The Arno in the Casentino is simply a quiet, shining little country stream, with ripples at the shallow places and still pools in holes hollowed under the banks like any brook at home.

As we neared the bridge at the foot of Bibbiena hill we saw it and the main road already alive with the earlier home-comers, persons that lived far up on the mountain slopes and had long hours of tramping to reach their eeries before the light should fail. It was a motley procession. It looked like a whole people moving out of one land into another. Women on donkey-back with men tramping by their side, like Joseph and Mary in Fra Angelico's Flight into Egypt; children in little carts or gamboling along the roadside; driven oxen, sheep, and pigs; laden baskets of homely bargains, new short-handled green umbrellas; and a running fire of jest and laugh and chatter along the whole line. As each branching way left the main road it received its share of the procession, and all along the valley and far up the hill-slopes we could see the diverging thin lines, dark against the dusty roads.

Once fairly in Bibbiena our chief thought was to get out again. In the church of the convent San Lorenzo there are two della Robbia pieces; and the old twelfth century Propositura has interesting architectural details. But this was not the day for seeing Bibbiena's relics. The narrow streets were

utterly jammed; booths, shops, auction, all roaring and reeking. We wanted the quiet path by the river again.

The twilight was falling as we wandered back. The road to the bridge was more populous now. Here and there were groups stopped to compare purchases, or for an argument, or to make farewells at a forking of the roads. We passed a perplexed and perspiring peasant trying to drive a great hog that preferred to lie down. The man looked at us inquiringly and almost beseechingly, as if for advice. But the pig was too big and too sick for our wits to compass any better than its owner's the means of moving it. Along the path by the river an angler loitered, loth to leave his unwhipped pools; and in the thicket across the stream a man with gun still beat the bushes for song-bird game. In the fields by the path were little flocks of sheep tended by singing girls and diminutive whistling boys. And behind and in front of us straggled scattering little groups of home-farers. It was the simple pastoral that the old painters loved and that still lives in the Casentino to-day little changed from those days in which it was painted into the Holy Family backgrounds.

From Poppi to Camaldoli is a slow drive out of the valley garden, up hill-slopes long denuded of forest and horribly stripped of soil, and worn into great ravines by the unchecked waters. As we wound along a bleak, bare shoulder we saw below us Moggiona, a gray ghost of a village on the gashed and sterile slope. It pitifully pointed the moral of

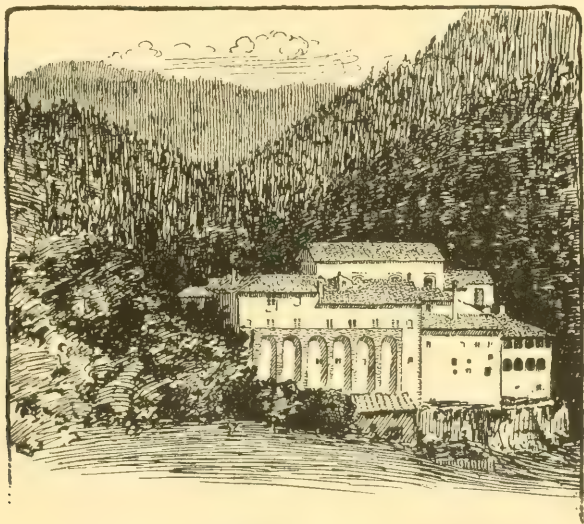
this story of reckless deforestation. Nature takes quick revenge for an affront of this sort. Beyond and above Moggiona, however, the forests began. And here all was luxuriance and loveliness. The road from here to the old monastery (now partly hotel) was lined by chestnut, oak, and copper beech-woods, while above them the firs climbed dense and dark to the crest of the mountains. There were sounding waters and deep, wild cañons. And such resplendent masses of color—it was October—as fairly took our breath. The vividness, the continuity, and boldness of color of these great thousand-acre blotches on the mountain-sides were beyond our experience.

Camaldoli itself is a miscellaneous pile rebuilt in the sixteenth century and picturesquely put by a swift stream in the wild cañon of the Giovana. It was founded by St. Romualdo in the eleventh century, and has had an eventful history of piety, war, scholarship, and benevolence. St. Romualdo is only less interesting as a personality than St. Francis, and his white-gowned and white-hatted disciples were masters in both the arts of acquiring property and charitably dispersing it. To them is largely due the credit for the preservation and fostering care of the beautiful trees all about the convent. Even to-day their ownership of forest lands is still extensive.

Two miles above the monastery, an hour's walk, is the hermitage, a curious group of little huts and two small churches in a large inclosure. The hut or cell occupied by St. Romualdo is pointed out, as

well as one built by "a Medicean princess in expiation of the grave fault of having entered, by means of a masculine dress, the sacred inclosure prohibited to women." The inhabitants of these cells led a most rigorous life of solitude.

La Verna is farther and higher from the valley's center than Camaldoli. One can go, indeed, by



Camaldoli in its forest.

winding and climbing forest paths directly from Camaldoli, visiting Badia a Prataglia on the way. This beautifully situated alpine hamlet of charcoal burners stands on the highway from the Casentino over Monte Acuto into the Romagna. It was the seat of an abbey before Camaldoli was founded. But as St. Romualdo's foundation grew larger, Prataglia's Badia grew less. In the crypt there once ex-



isted, according to Beni, certain columns with Roman capitals like those of San Vitale at Ravenna.

We visited La Verna from Poppi, going, as is necessary, by way of Bibbiena. Our devoted Poppi driver deploring almost tearfully his inability, on account of sudden press of affairs, to take us himself, and warning us sadly against the inhumanity of Bibbiena drivers, put us into a decrepit little cart behind an equally decrepit and dwarfish pony in charge of a mere babe of a *cocchiere*. This infant was to get us as far as Bibbiena, where we might hire a suitable carriage for the rest of the way. The morning had broken gray and misty, and as we reached the summit of Bibbiena hill, and center of the village, a cold, steady drizzle had enveloped all our world. It was a discouraging beginning, and we were quite ready to turn back. But from the gloomy cavern of a stable, in front of which our child coachman had stopped, an active, dark-eyed man had already stepped out and was asking our pleasure. We perforce explained the situation and our need, and asked him, not without a secret hope of being dissatisfied, to name at once and definitely his *ultissimo prezzo*. Our hope of dissatisfaction was more than realized. It was a *cattivo tempo*, the road would be slippery for the horse, he himself would get wet, and so on. He would take us for twenty lire. With a smile of knowledge we turned away, relieved at this easy quietus on our unpromising expedition.

"Twelve lire would be more than good pay," cried Rowena, "we'll go back."



"Ah, well, then twelve lire; shall I hitch up immediately, signora?" came back without a moment's hesitation. And before we had recovered our breath, used even as we were to Italian bargaining and vagary in the matter of prices, our new conductor had slipped on his oilskins and was hitching up. In another trice we were off with a clatter and splashing, starting downhill to the La Verna road.

We came soon to the little Dominican church and convent of Santa Maria del Sasso. This was originally a simple hospice, but was expanded under the direction of Savonarola and by the generosity of Lorenzo the Magnificent. In the church is an ornamented central tabernacle, with a della Robbia frieze. Behind this shrine, under



"St. Francis's famous monastery, set aloft in mountain cliffs and forest."

a perched dove, is the sacred stone (*sasso*) on which a peasant once saw the Holy Mary seated by the roadside at the spot where now the church stands.

Along the climbing road to St. Francis's famous monastery, set aloft in mountain cliffs and forest, we saw again the characteristic scenes of the simple

old-time life that still persists in this shut-in valley of medievalism; old women with distaff and spindle, ox-carts and wooden plows, singing lads and maids with their sheep. And for a while all the beauties of the valley fields and vineyards lay on either hand. But beyond the Corsalone the way quickly grows steeper and rougher, and the tilled land gives place to oak scrub and hill-side pastures. The road is a hard one, having many bits of climbing far too cruel even for light vehicles.

It was a day of moving mist and showers, and



The old well at La Verna.

the views of the valley below were broken and shifting. In front of and above us all was gray. We seemed to be winding and climbing upward to some mystery in the clouds.

La Verna's strange congeries of great cliffs, rock caverns, and unformed buildings, a holy place of mystic ecstasies, is inde-

scribable in words. The seeing visitor will find himself accompanied by a brown-robed guide, who leads him by confusing paths from point to point, reciting as he goes the naïve history of the adventures of

St. Francis, the "sublime beggar." Here he talked with the birds and small beasts of the forest; there he wrestled with the devil; in that bare rock niche he slept on the rough stone shelf; this is the great stone where Christ sat when he appeared to the holy man; there is the jutting rock where the faithful falcon alighted to wake him each morning. And, finally, where the chapel of the Stigmata is now built into the rambling pile of stone walls is the very spot of the greatest miracle of all, that fact or fancy of the stigmatization, which has led to such interminable theologic and scientific discussion.

For the incorrigible treasure hunter there are in La Verna's church and chapels numerous opportunities for discovery. The della Robbia terra-cottas, especially a beautiful Annunciation and an Ascension in the principal church, singularly consonant in their simplicity and setting with the whole atmosphere of the place, are a quest in themselves. There are, too, some paintings here and there, and some beautifully carved wooden stalls.

The hundred gowned, bareheaded monks who still inhabit this vast confusion of convent chapels and cloisters, with their chanting processions and their friendly hospitalities, lend La Verna an atmosphere of medieval reality. But more than anything else it is the recognition of the actuality of the extraordinary man whom La Verna personifies that the visitor retains as a lasting memory of his pilgrimage.

St. Francis was one of that smaller group of historic religious mystics whose hallucinations led to

enduring action, and whose personality had a reality that has made it persist as a genuine religious force even into these iconoclastic days. The seeming miracles of his sub-conscious hours someway translated themselves reasonably in his times of consciousness. His acting fell no whit behind his exhorting. His body was utterly transparent to the radiations of his spirit.

It is only the law of things that the Little Brothers of Poverty should fall short to-day, in some measure, of their founder's ideal. Jovial, red-faced, fat-chopped Brother Urbino, who showed us much special politeness, someway hardly realized the ascetic figure of the emaciated and pain-racked Francis. And his voluble speech often touched worldly matters.



A climbing path at La Verna.

One of his stories was of a man who went far away from Italy to California and made a fortune—ah, such a mass of dollars—and came back with them, and spent them—*e finalmente morì!* It lacked *d'esprit* as an anecdote, but it revealed a certain de-

generate interest in the dollars that was suggestive. Still, it would be altogether too surprising to find every Franciscan a St. Francis.

A picture we saw a little later, as we went down the road from the convent gate to our carriage, was more satisfying. In the open door of a rough little hut, almost filled with piled-up, stripped willow branches, a tall, slender, sweet-faced monk was sitting and seriously chatting with the peasant woman who was plaiting the willow withes into baskets. This was more like the little brother of poverty of the Fioretti, more like the simple holy man that Sabatier makes so vivid and convincing in the *Life*. As much as La Verna is real and a stimulating personification in stone and terra-cotta and forest and cliff of the spirit of its founder, we needed some such human touch as this of Brother Bernadone in the peasant hut to remind us to the full of the spiritual beauty and simplicity, the very etherealization of humanity that was Saint Francis.

### III. PRATO AND PISTOJA

Along a single short stretch of railway, of sixty miles or thereabouts, which extends from Florence on the Arno to Pisa on the Arno, but doesn't follow the river at all, lie the four towns of Prato, Pistoja, Lucca, and Pisa. All have close historic and artistic associations with Florence, and all are, in a way, really only a part of Florentine sightseeing. Pisa is, of course, on the regular tourist calendar; its leaning tower, cathedral, baptistry, and Campo



Santo, that wonderful four in their isolated, quiet field, have made it famed over all the world. But Lucca, if it had no more in it to see than its single, priceless jewel, the tomb of Ilaria—and it has many more—ought on no account to be missed. And Pistoja and Prato are, if not equally, at least very certainly, worth while. From Prato one carries away at least one lifelong picture, that of the exquisite Donatello pulpit in colored stone on the external wall angle of the cathedral, and of Pistoja he will remember much more than the guide-books' supposition, that it was the original home of the pistol.

The servants showed what seemed an unnecessary excitement when they learned of our projected little outing. Maria had dark premonitions of the dangers of extended railway travel; Marina devoted extra hours to the overhauling of Rowena's wardrobe. Beppi commiserated Boy, the dog, on their approaching lonesomeness. To put the sixty miles of railway travel in their proper light—or, indeed, one hundred and twenty, as we should have to re-traverse them to get back again—we spoke of the five days and nights of steady steaming from New York to San Francisco as a journey made not infrequently in our home country. But this was a mistake of over-shooting the mark. Maria, indeed, who had been in distant Vienna and Buda-Pesth, seemed to have some realization of such a feat of railway travel, but for Beppi and Marina it was an inconceivable performance. However, after getting new candles for the shrine on the outer house wall,



and having them blessed by the village priest as he made his benevolent round of the roads, the servants had some hope of seeing us again.

This blessing of the field and roadside shrines by the Settignano prior and a motley little procession of women and children, with two or three old men, shot us back through the centuries. It was on the very morning of our projected excursion. We were wakened at dawn by the intoning voices in the roadway, and, peeping through the shutters, we saw the straggling procession coming towards us, along the road from Gamberaia. Colored banners, tall candles, and a crucifix on a long staff bobbed about overhead. In front strode seriously the priest and his assistant, robed in their silken vestments. Along the flanks and at the rear of the little column gamboled children. Halt was made under our wall shrine, with its fresh flowers and new candles, and the prayer and blessings were intoned by the priest, while the women murmured responses and the children strove to keep a respectful silence. Then all moved on to the next tinsel Mary, or pitiful, weather-worn roadside crucifixion.

While Prato is only about twenty minutes by railway from Florence, we managed to prolong the journey to an hour and a half by going by the noisy, smoky, jouncing steam tram, that starts from near the central railway station and lands one in Prato under the high, crumbling, plant-grown walls of the old prison. Part of the hour and a half was used up in allowing a passenger to get out and trot back a quarter of a mile for his hat, lost overboard. And

some more disappeared during the proper discussion of this event by the tram officials and most of the passengers. But it is exactly for such incidents of real Italy that we travel when we can by intermittent trams that ramble through fields and back streets, or by pony carriages that explore country lanes and pull up at the smallest of *trattorie*.

The Prato tram shows one a good deal of Tuscan life. It brushes past the long, hanging, fruit-laden



A bit of Tuscan countryside.

branches that straggle over vineyard fences. It ambles slowly by a stone-floored *aja*, where the men are beating the grain out with sticks or whipping the sheaves against the floor. It pushes through high walls of corn, a lush green growth that makes mockery of the too familiar phrases used to describe the "centuries-old, gaunt, used-up land of Italy." It takes one intimately by open doorways, in which

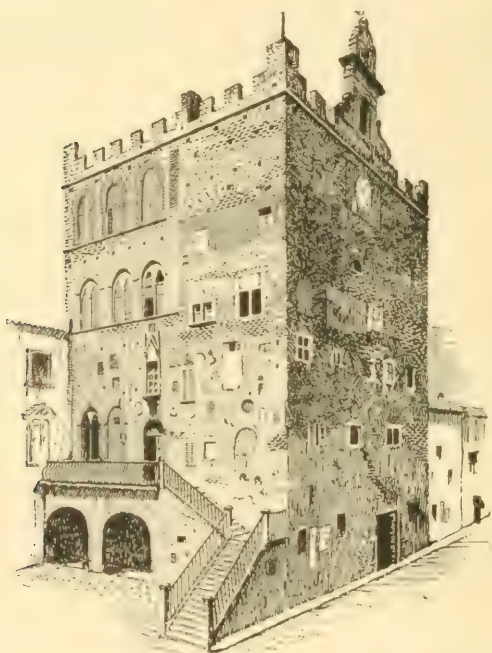
women and girls sit, chatting and laughing, but always steadily, interminably plaiting straw for the gay hats of the Mercato Nuovo in Florence. And finally, it lands one under the old fortress and prison walls of Santa Barbara, and immediately at the door of the curious domed church of Madonna delle Carceri. Here we begin promptly our Prato sight-seeing.

It is a church of the late fifteenth century, in the form of a Greek cross. The heavy dome rests on an attic story, and seems too large for the building. Within there is an attractive blue and white terracotta frieze by Andrea della Robbia, with four large medallions of the Evangelists, with their conventional accessories.

We had popped into the church too quickly to be espied by any possible *commissionaires*, if such there might be lurking for visitors in this sleepy little town. But when we came out and wandered slowly along, with eyes fascinated by the crumbling, high, old city wall, with the decaying fortress atop of it, and the little green bushes growing fearlessly in its crevices, we found ourselves provided with a *valet de place*, of such insinuating grace and quiet persistence that for once we broke one of the firmest articles in our traveling creed. We surrendered with hardly a struggle, and accepted our master. He was a boy with a live white rat in his arms; or better, he was the Boy with the White Rat. For he is unique in our experience.

All that sweet, long summer day of loitering in churches and before corner shrines, standing deaf-

ened among the copper beaters by the river, or watching and chatting with the wool-weavers and hat-makers in the by-streets, we shared our delights with our boy of the white rat. As we sat at coffee on the



"The patched walls of the ancient Palazzo Pretorio."

piazza sidewalk in the shade of the patched walls of the ancient Palazzo Pretorio, watching the street ragamuffins climb precariously up to put their thirsty lips to those water-spouting ones of the stone Cupid on the old piazza fountain, our rat-tamer and his blinking charge nestled at our feet.

Sometimes we made an imposing procession of it

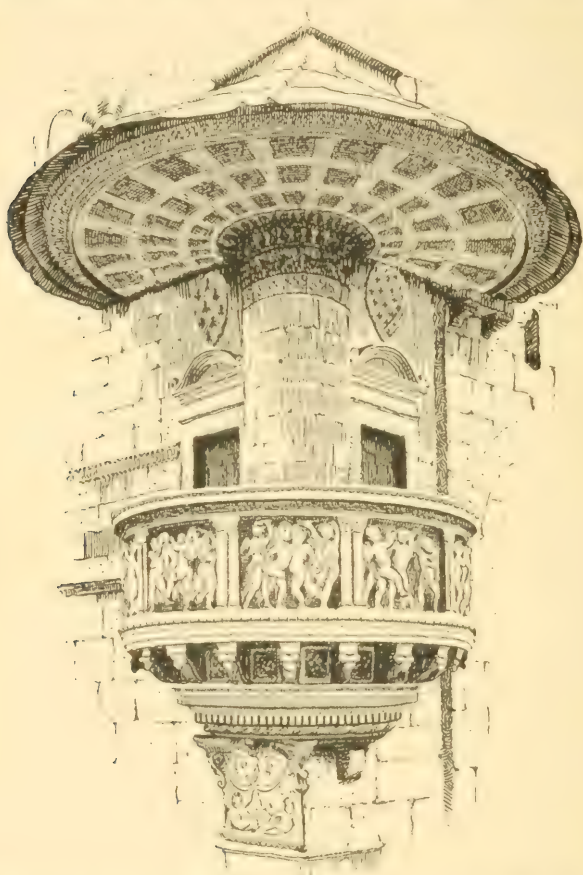
when we picked up followers faster than they tired of us—or rather of that soft-haired, pink-eyed, white thing nuzzling in our guide's arms. For we were nothing to the children of Prato, but the white rat was much. As we rested on the steps of the fountain in the cathedral piazza watching the pigeons whirling about the beautiful pulpit, we had twelve boys, beside the rat, for company; as many joyous children almost as Donatello had carved there in the pulpit reliefs.

The pulpit is partly Michelozzo's, according to authority, but the reliefs must certainly be Donatello's own. They remind one irresistibly of those happiest of all singing boys in the world, those living images in stone on the *cantoria* in the little Duomo museum in Florence. Five times a year (Easter, May 1, August 15, September 5, and Christmas Day) Prato's famous relic, the girdle of the Madonna, is shown from the pulpit. The holy myths of this girdle are the subjects of some of the Duomo's most precious works of art. We find them in Ridolfo Ghirlandajo's fresco over the west portal, in Mino da Fiesole and Antonio Rossellini's carved pulpit, and in the Madonna statuette by Giovanni Pisano, the architect of the church. The finest frescoes in the cathedral are those of Filippo Lippi in the choir, picturing the lives of John the Baptist and Stephen the Martyr. It was here in Prato that Fra Filippo found and seduced from her convent cell the beautiful Lucrezia Buti, whose sweet Madonna face grows so familiar in the Lippi pictures.

In the quiet cloisters of San Francesco we saw



some fading frescoes in the manner of Giotto, but let our eyes linger more on the decaying beauties



"The pulpit is partly Michelozzo's, according to authority, but the reliefs must certainly be Donatello's own."

of the cloister inclosure: an old well, the peeling columns, and the ragged garden. In a cupboard

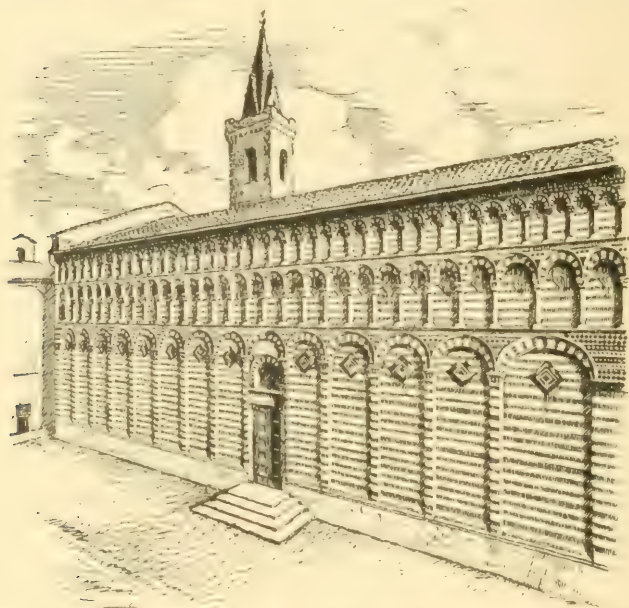


shrine on an angle of Via Santa Margherita is a fading but still very beautiful painting of Filippino Lippi, a Madonna and four accompanying figures, Anthony, Stephen, Margherita, and Costanza. It took much scurrying about by our rat-taming guide to get the key of the shrine doors, with the result that we viewed the picture with most of the inhabitants of the quarter at our elbows and back. But it was as new to some of them as to us.

Other things there are to see in Prato: two or three churches, with pictures of reputed interest, and a small gallery in the Palazzo Communale. But our day had come to its end. So the white rat escorted us faithfully to the station and waited with us for the train. It was truly a reluctant *a riverderci*.

Some persons have found Pistoja a revelation of unexpected beauty and interest. We have not. Beautiful things and interesting ones there are certainly, but the town as a whole brought us no such continuous, positive satisfaction and quiet joy as little Prato or larger Lucca. However, to the student grounded in Tuscan history or Tuscan art, Pistoja must be a rich hunting-ground. Even the casual visitor cannot escape realizing that he is in an atmosphere filled with murmurs of an unusually eventful past, and that he sees here surprisingly plainly something of the modulations that bind the art of one city or one epoch to that of another. To take a simple and very obvious instance: he notes unavoidably the appearance here and there on the church façades of those rows of short columns that are so

much more in evidence in Lucca, and so dominantly characteristic of the Pisan cathedral group. And in remembering that it was here that Catiline was defeated and slain, and that here the great Guelph-Ghibelline struggle took on its significant Blacks

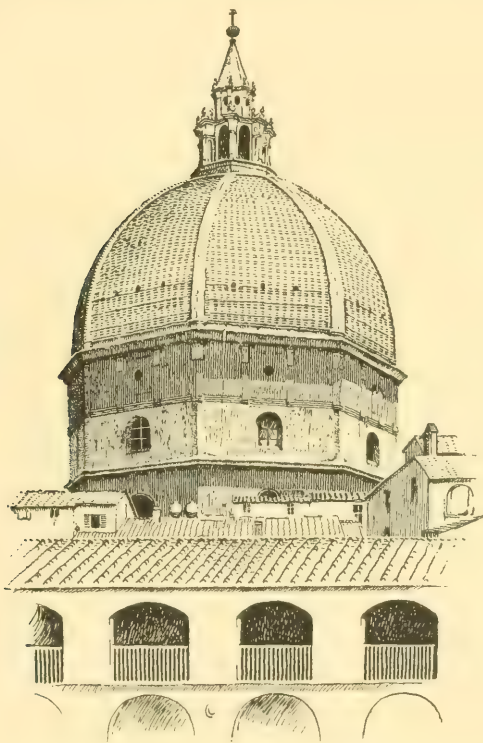


"The striking, column-laden, long façade of San Giovanni Fuorcivitas."

against Whites phase, one will have two samples of the incidents that go to make up the disproportionate importance this little town assumes in the tale of Rome and Italy.

Pistoja is a place of many churches, as one realizes even before reaching it from the abundance of towers and domes that lift above its red gray roofs.

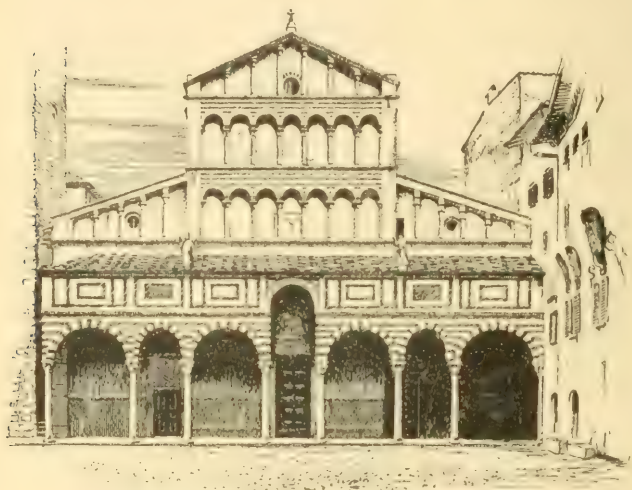
And almost all of these churches seem to have something in or on them worth seeing. There is the striking, column-laden, long façade of San Giovanni Fuorcivitas, with its fascinatingly naïve old relief of



“Vasari’s imposing dome and lantern on Madonna dell’ Umilta.”

the Last Supper (Gruamons) over the door. There is the elaborate pulpit of Giovanni Pisano in Sant’ Andrea, with its reliefs of crowded figures and curious animals between the bases of the columns. There

are the numerous frescoes of Giotto's school in San Francesco, and Vasari's imposing dome and lantern on Madonna dell' Umilta. Finally, there is the Duomo of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, with its façade of short columns, its loggia with statues



The Duomo of Pistoja.

on the roof, and its della Robbia medallions in the recess over the central door.

Inside the Duomo, near the entrance (right wall), is one of the most curious tomb monuments to be seen in all Italy. It commemorates the virtues of Cino Sinibaldi, teacher of Petrarch and friend of Dante. The naïve relief shows the poet professor lecturing to a group of students, among them Petrarch and one woman. Most of the class seem a little less than interested in the conference. At the

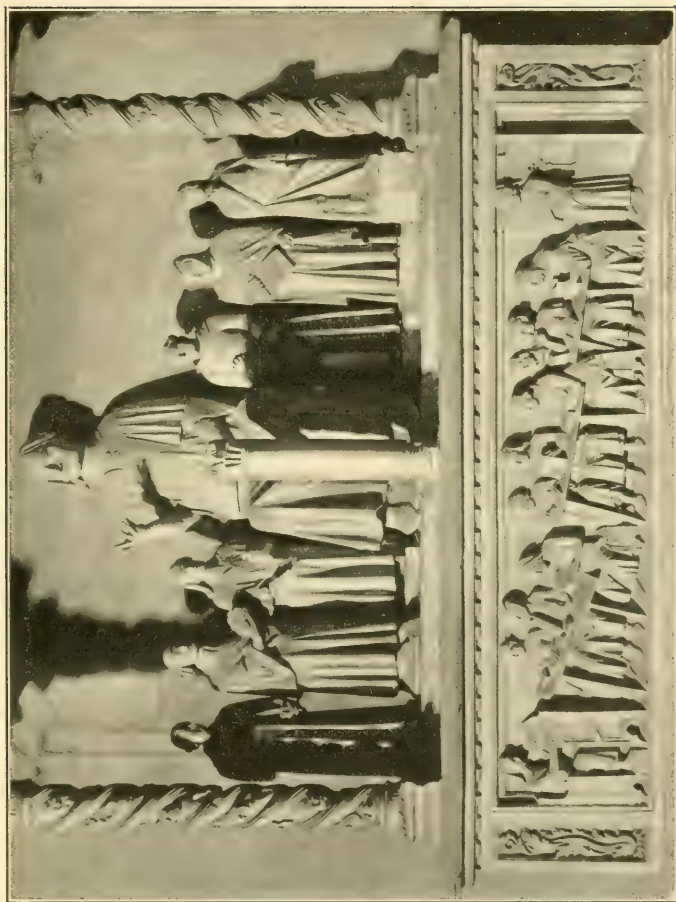


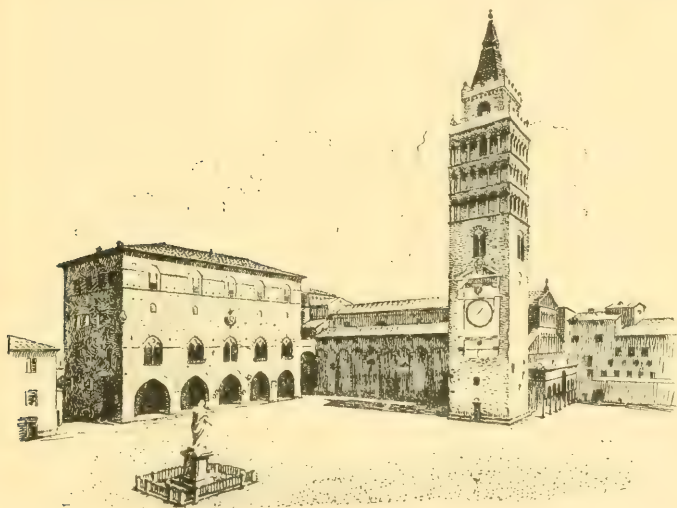
Photo. Alinari

DETAIL OF TOMB MONUMENT OF CINO DE' SINIBALDI  
Cellino di Nese: Duomo at Pistoia





other end of the church in the chapel of the Sacrament (left of the choir) is a Madonna and Child, and a rather stiff but interesting relief bust of Bishop Donato dei Medici, by Antonio Rossellino, the Settignano hill-side sculptor. The hollow-cheeked, set-lipped ascetic face is very strong, and suggests careful portraiture. In the chapel on the right of the



“The Duomo is one of a group of interesting structures facing on an open piazza, whose most conspicuous feature is the high square campanile, or Torre del Podestà.”

choir is the principal treasure of the church, an altar with elaborate silver reredos and wings worked in marvelous detail and delicacy by Pistojesse and Florentine silversmiths. The relief carvings tell stories from the Old and New Testaments, and from the life of St. James. We spent a fascinated hour be-

fore this wealth of little figures and scenes, finding every minute new beauties or curiosities to exclaim at. One could repeat there many such hours.

The Duomo is one of a group of interesting structures facing on an open piazza, whose most conspicuous feature is the high square campanile, or



The inclosed court of the Palazzo Pretorio.

Torre del Podestà. It was anciently a fortified tower, but in 1301 was made over and ornamented with series of short columns in Luccan and Pisan fashion. On the same side with Duomo and Campanile is the old Palazzo Communale, while opposite are the octagonal black and white Baptistry and the later Palazzo Pretorio. Workmen were busy in the Palazzo del Comune, and so we could not see its reputed treasures of wood-carving and marble re-

liefs. But in the Palazzo Pretorio we had a cooling rest in the inclosed court, sitting with our legs a-swing on the old stone bench of justice. In the walls and heavy masonry pillars of the roof vaulting are many stemmi of ancient podestàs. It is a place of charm and reminiscence, this cool, cellar-like quadrangle of the stern old palace.

In the piazza a weekly cloth market is held, and in the wall of the Palazzo Communale an official metal *braccio* measure is embedded, so that any man may readily verify his own or his neighbor's cloth yard.

Of the other sights of Pistoja, certainly first in importance is the frieze of the Ospedale del Ceppo. Stretching for several rods above the six medallioned arches of the long arcade of the building's face, and fresh and beautiful under its glazing, this frieze is a glory of terra-cotta modeling and coloring. There are more than eighty figures in the whole piece. They are arranged in groups representing works of charity, among them the gift of drink to the thirsty, food to the starving, lodgment to the pilgrim, burial to the dead. Between the groups are larger single figures of the personified Virtues, while separating the six arches of the façade, and at its ends, are seven great medallions representing religious scenes. Whether the work be of the della Robbias or not—the Pistojesse attribute it to Giovanni—it is one well worthy of their name.

This meager account of Pistoja sights must suffice. Her streets are clean and animate with life. She does not belie her reputation for industry and

business initiative. But these do not particularly add to her charm. Sleepiness and medievalism are more sought for by the visitor to Italy than the Italian version of our own success. We pass Turin and Milan rapidly, to tarry in Florence and Siena. And so I should advise more hours or days in Prato or Lucca than in Pistoja. For all I know, Lucca may do a great deal more business than Pistoja. She is more than twice as large, and her name is strongly suggestive of high, slender bottles in the grocer's window. But she herself seems old and quiet and very beautiful.

#### IV. LUCCA

At the Pistoja station we made a trifling slip in the carrying out of our schedule of travel. We boarded a train going the wrong way. We got out at the first stop, but found we had some little time for observation of station, side-tracks, and switch-signals, before another train would come along with engine at the proper end. The station happened to be one which is the getting-off place for visitors to certain springs and baths in the mountains near by, and is besieged by the many hotel and pension and livery touts incidental to such places. We were evidently among the first of the season's visitors. At sight of us descending from the train a lust of blood seized them. But when time went on, and we did not issue from the little station waiting-room to be torn apart by them, consternation reigned. We could hear the murmurs of our besiegers.

"Are they never coming out!"

"What unusually extraordinary forestieri!"

It was like showing a pair of early Christian martyrs to the lions and then snatching them back. But our train came at last. And we set out through the little plots of corn and beans bounded by trees and vines. Tall, slim *cannae* were growing along the water ditches. Everything was green and fresh. The sun was bright and warm, but there was a cooling breeze. The little fields had for immediate background the rounded Pistojesse hills and mountains, with their sprinkling of villas and old towers and pavilioned hotel resorts. In the distance, and closing the longer vistas, we had glimpses of the high Apuan Alps. Sometimes we skirted the bases of real mountains, and near Pescia we crossed the river of the same name to escape the roughness of these Apennine outflanks. Then our omnibus train ambled on through the broad valley of the river, until finally the host of flat-topped, square towers of Lucca came into sight, with a group of extraordinary great peaks in the background. These peaks, though dimmed and softened by distance, seemed of a boldness and apparent impregnability hardly surpassed by a Tyrolean or Swiss group of summits.

Lucca has too much in it, there is too much of it, to describe it in any detail in such a mere sketch as this. The picture must be one of the most fleeting impressionism; an impression of a dream place of high campanile and many-columned, sculptured church fronts; of little green trees growing and beckoning



high in the air on the summit of an old square tower of romance, and of a marble figure forever asleep in a great cool church of her who once smiled down from the parapet of that high tower of the proud Guinigi. In this picture, too, there must be quiet, pigeon-haunted piazzas, bounded by arcaded shops and connected by antiquated tortuous streets that lead you to utter confusion, that does not matter in



“Until finally the host of flat-topped, square towers of Lucca came into sight.”

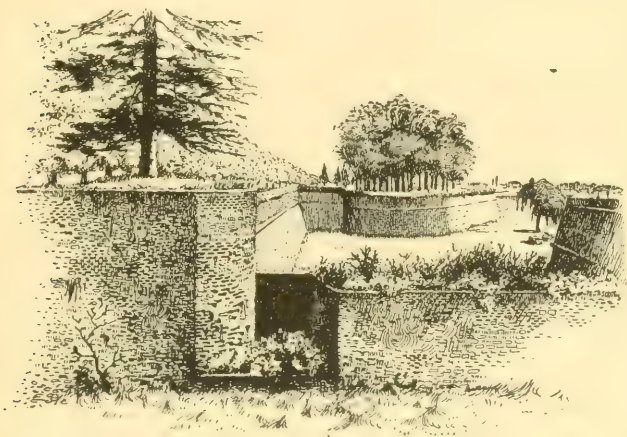
the least. For, wherever you go, there is something more to add to the sweet dream.

And how fit it is that this old-world place should be completely inclosed by low, bastioned walls, with dry moat without, and broad, grassy, tree-grown bank within. We walked slowly around the entire city on this fascinating promenade, looking now down into the medley of crowded houses, now broadly across the red-tiled roofs to the scattered score of lifting towers, and now away from the city



out over the flat valley and plain to the distant high, blue mountains. In the moat below a troop of black-gowned seminarists were at simple play; along the white roads, radiating away into invisibility, carts and wagons slowly moved; in the flat fields a few cattle grazed, and on the moat's outer edge a uniformed officer made his canter of exercise.

We were loth to surrender our picture of Lucca whole for the closer examination of even the most



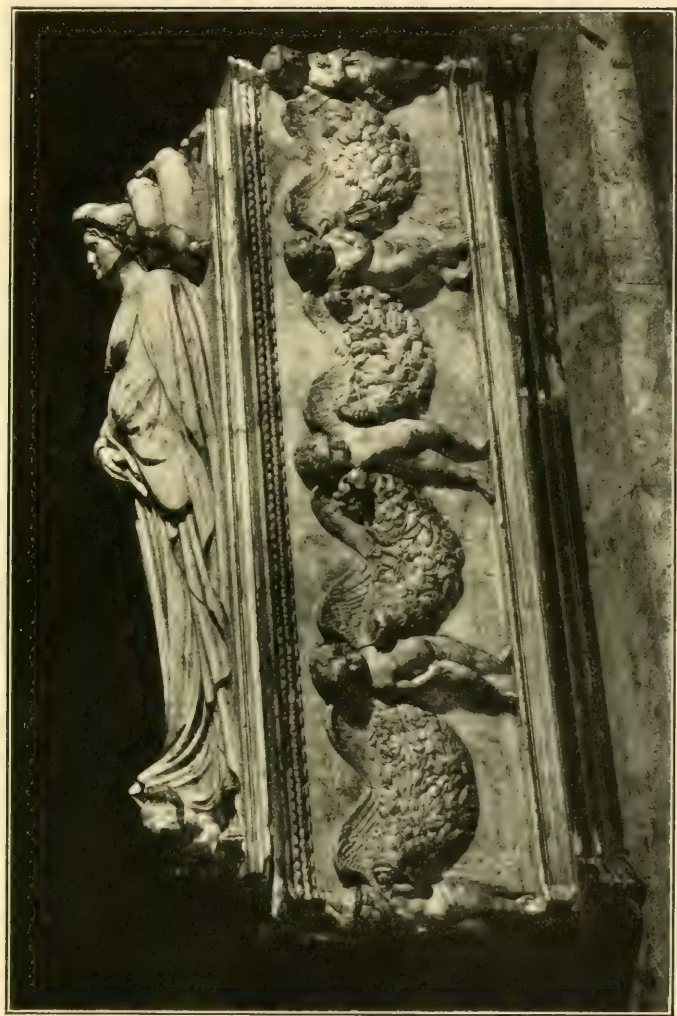
“How fit it is that this old-world place should be completely inclosed by low bastioned walls, with dry moat without, and broad, grassy, tree-grown bank within.”

beautiful bits of the mosaic. But when in our drifting we finally found ourselves in the quiet little Piazza San Martino, under the high, many-columned campanile of the cathedral, we went in to see that most beautiful single thing in Lucca, Jacopo della Quercia's gravestone of Ilaria. But first we had

our fill of the beauties and curiosities of the cathedral façade. It is a wonderful Romanesque church front, with its three-arched loggia, its triple series of open galleries, its many antique short columns, its striking sculptures, and naïve ornamentation.

The interior, nearly three hundred feet long and a hundred feet high, is impressive and beautiful, and contains a number of choice things. Most memorable is the Ilaria tomb. This marble effigy on its lifted bed, with its garlanded putti and quaint little watchdog, is of remarkable delicacy and grace of modeling, and utterly expressive of tenderness and repose. The pillowed head, high-ruffed and filleted, with its sweet face, the lightly folded hands, the faintly outlined form under the soft draperies, all make it a thing of everlasting beauty, probably the most beautiful tomb of its type in Italy. It at least vies with the Guidarelli monument in Ravenna for this distinction.

Lucca's most celebrated relic, the wooden Volto Santo, is inclosed in an elaborate small tabernacle or chapel (near the middle of the left aisle), called *Il Tempietto*, which was specially built for it by Matteo Civitali. The relic is an ornamented wooden cross, with a face of Christ painted on it. The face is a strange one, strongly suggestive of Byzantine origin, or at least influence. It is kept veiled in its shrine, except on certain rare occasions. The myth accounting for the existence and presence here of the relic accredits its making partly to the hand of St. Nicodemus, and partly to some divine interference, and includes a curious tale of its travels and adventures.

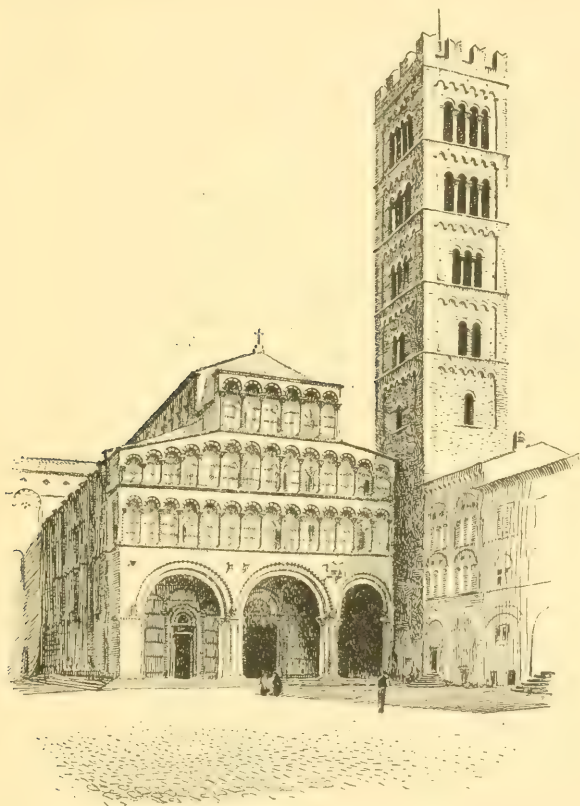


Photo, Alinari

TOMB OF ILARIA DEL CARRETTO  
Jacopo delle Quercia: Duomo of Lucca



After its making it lay long hidden, "till in 782 a Piedmontese bishop found it by means of a vision, and put it aboard ship and abandoned it to the sea. Cast



The Duomo and Campanile of Lucca.

hither and thither in the waves, the ship at last came ashore at Luna, where the Bishop of Lucca was staying, in the summer heat. So, led by God, he would

have borne it to Lucca. But the people of Luna, who had heard of its sanctity, objecting, it was placed in a cart drawn by two white oxen, and, as it had been abandoned by the sea, so now it was given to the world. But the oxen, who, in fact, came from the fields of Lucca, returned thither, to the disgust of the people of Luna, and to the great and holy joy of the Bishop of Lucca."

Near Il Tempietto is a statue of St. Sebastian, by Civitali, and in the right transept of the church are several other pieces by the same sculptor, who is Lucca's most famous artist. The church contains a number of interesting pictures, the most notable among which is a Madonna with Saints Stephen and John the Baptist, by Fra Bartolommeo. It is held by students to be one of the finest works of this master.

In the ancient but much made-over church of San Giovanni, just off the cathedral piazza, the old woman caretaker would let us look at nothing unadorned with the hall-mark of age. A few columns from the Roman church that originally stood here, and a great font sunk in a patterned marble floor, a veritable duocento plunge bath, in the old baptistry, to which the Lucchese generations of a thousand years or longer came for the sprinkling that opened Heaven's gates to them: these were what we saw of San Giovanni.

In San Frediano, far across the town to the north, and hard by the grass-topped ramparts, we did better. It was rather dark here for the pictures, of which none, perhaps, is of unusual distinction; but



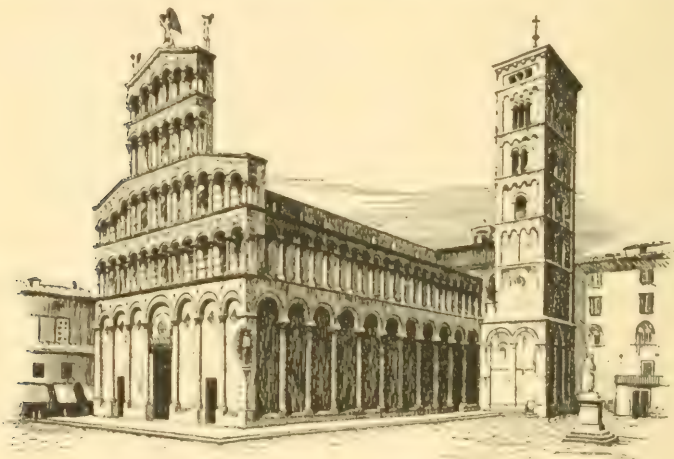
it was not too dark to see well the interesting ancient mosaic (restored) outside on the façade, and the great marble font within, very old and primitively sculptured. In the chapel of the Holy Sacrament we saw on the altar another sculpture by Jacopo della Quercia, a Madonna and Saints in relief, and in the chapel of St. Zita we saw the tomb of that canonized housemaid of Lucca, who is at once the type and glory of the Lucchese folk. San Frediano's campanile is one of the highest and best among all the many of Lucca, and its façade is as impressive in its way as that of the cathedral, or as that of the extraordinary, much-repaired false front of San Michele.

Most of the churches of Lucca are of very ancient foundation, but of much medieval and modern patching. San Michele is an excellent example. Its history of building and rebuilding covers more than a thousand years, for its beginning goes back to the ninth century, and its last extensive repairing occurred in the nineteenth. In its devotion to short-columned galleries on its façade it is more Pisan than anything Pisa can boast of, for two stories of these galleries are carried right on up into the air far above the roof of the nave. The architect abandoned all reality in order to indulge a too pretentious aspiration.

On the wall angle to the right of the central door of San Michele is a statue of the Madonna by Civitali, and in the loggia of the Palazzo Pretorio, across the piazza, is a statue of the artist himself.

In San Romano, near the Piazza Napoleone, there

is a strange tomb monument of Civitali's making. It stands just behind the high altar, and is the monument of the martyred St. Romanus. The youthful figure of the saint, in painted alabaster, lies in a niche under an inscription, with a pitying Christ and two cherubim heads in a flat lunette above. The recum-



San Michele in Lucca.

bent figure is modeled in high relief, and seems continually on the point of rolling out of its shallow niche. It is also contorted rather distressfully in order to show as much of itself as possible. However, despite the unhappy position and apparently constantly imminent catastrophe, the figure has much beauty.

Another of Civitali's colored pieces, an Assumption of the Madonna, is to be found in the museum in the Palazzo Provinciale on the Piazza Napoleone.

In this museum also are two pictures of Fra Bartolommeo, one very famous, as well as a number of others of some interest.

In trying to come back to the center of town from San Frediano, we took, by good fortune, a wrong way. It brought us under that tower whose forested summit—one tree and a bush are forest enough for a tower's top—is so conspicuous in any general view of the town. The building above which it rises is one of the palaces of the ancient great family of Lucca, the Guinigi. It was a Guinigi to whom the beautiful Ilaria had been married but a year before her death. And it was a Guinigi who discovered and became patron of and gave opportunity to that extraordinary youth of Lucca, who became its greatest warrior, indeed, one of the greatest in all time in all Italy. This was Castruccio Castracani, who gave the Florentines the most disastrous beating they ever suffered, and who became lord of Pisa, and, indeed, of all Tuscany, and aspired even to be the very ruler of Rome.

The history of Lucca in that most animated and picturesque of all its historical periods, the first quarter of the fourteenth century, is simply the story of the varying, but mostly ascending, fortunes of Castracani and his Guinigi adherents. And so our brief contemplation of the exterior of the old Guinigi palace and its verdurous tower at the end of a full day was a fitting close to our sightseeing in Lucca. It was, too, a proper introduction to the turning of our attention to Pisa, whose history so interlocks with that of Lucca.

## V. PISA

A thousand years ago Pisa was a great city, and immensely more important than it is now. And a thousand years before that it had made a decent beginning as a Roman settlement, provided with all those inevitable architectural accompaniments of temples, theaters, and arches, whose remains come to be the very commonplaces of Italian travel. Even two thousand years of history lose some of their thrill when they are faced too often; and the American traveler, so quickly adaptable and swift of comprehension, soon finds himself content with the same adjectives and exclamations under the crumbling ruins of a Roman arch of Hadrian as at home he would use in face of the dilapidated homestead cabin of the first settler on the town-site. He simply takes centuries for units instead of years, and goes unconcernedly ahead with his sightseeing. And Pisa he has known for too long as the home of the Leaning Tower to be seduced away from the immediate seeing of this pictured wonder of the school geographies by any account, ever so compact, of the city's adventures during two thousand years of active life.

As Pisa is situated on, or at least near, the sea, it may be taken for granted that some of these adventures were maritime; as, indeed, they were, to the intimate knowledge of Genoa and Venice and Sicily, and even of the pagans in distant Tunis. And as most adventures of olden time arose from duties of self-defense or aspirations of aggression, it may likewise be assumed with confidence—a confidence

justified by most impressive facts—that Pisa played its part in the various internal and exotic wars that touched her interests in those old days. And by the end of this ruminating our traveler would find his carriage, taken at the railway station, already depositing him in front of his long-cherished Leaning Tower in that distant field of the Four Glories of Pisa, the Piazza del Duomo.

It was in her greatest days that Pisa built for herself the Four Glories. They commemorate not only the piety of the Pisa of eight hundred years ago, but also her prowess and her pride. For they contain in the way of numerous antique pillars and saintly relics much booty of Pisa's great campaigns, and their magnificence was beyond that of any other Italian city's aspiration. Indeed, there is no equivalent group to-day in any other Italian city of Pisa's size, or several times its size. Nor anywhere else in Italy can the visitor see so easily and so tranquilly all that is most worth seeing of a city. For one might go from Pisa without visiting any other part of it than the isolated churchyard field of the Duomo and yet suffer afterward no too serious pangs of unseized opportunity. There are numerous churches in Pisa, all of more or less interest in structure or contents; there is a civic museum (in the cloisters of San Francesco), with paintings and sculpture of value. There is the irregular Piazza dei Cavalieri, with its church and its palace of San Stefano, and its notoriety derived from the Hunger Tower, now long destroyed, where a precious Ghibelline archbishop starved Guelph Ugolino and his sons. Dante,



the poet, and Carpeaux, the sculptor, have told the story each with his own tools. And there is the Ponte di Mezzo, where of old the game of mimic war was played that helped fit the Pisan citizens to be the Pisan men-at-arms. Finally, there are "literary landmarks," haunts of Shelley and Byron and others, to be looked up. But all of these, if time be short, should not lessen by an hour the visit to the Four Glories. Especially as that most interesting and fascinating little jewel-case of a chapel, Santa Maria della Spina, on the river bank, between the Ponte Solferino and the Ponte Mezzo, can be seen on the way from the station to the Duomo, or *vice versa*. This pause at the little chapel "for the sailors that go to sea" will let one see at the same time the graceful curve of the Arno, and some of the picturesque palace façades along its right bank.

One of the beauties of the English cathedrals is that derived from their setting, their quiet isolation in the green close that guards them from the press and noise of the city streets. And conversely, this lack of churchyard is one of the misfortunes of most of the great continental churches. Pisa's duomo has the advantage of isolation and remoteness from the city life; the Piazza del Duomo is really a great churchyard, holding easily, besides the cathedral, the baptistry, the Campo Santo, and the campanile or "leaning tower."

Beginning with this last I hasten to say that actual acquaintance discovers it to be less a curiosity and more an object of beauty than one thinks to find.



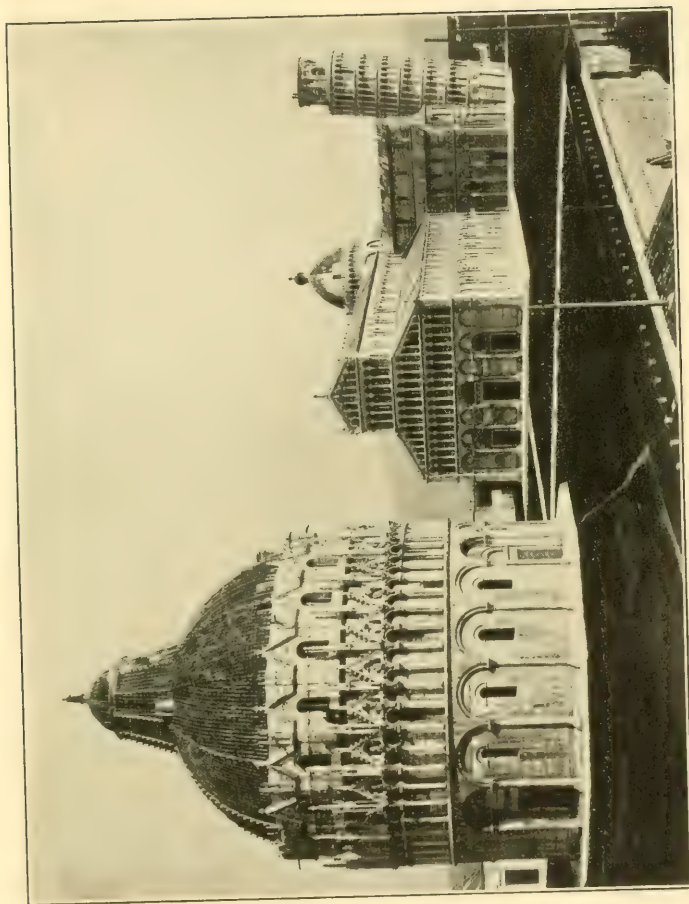


Photo. Alinari

DUOMO, LEANING TOWER, AND BAPTISTRY AT PISA



Not that it does not bear out satisfactorily its reputation for eccentricity; it leans; it leans amazingly; but its beautiful color, its successive wreaths of colonnades, and its aspect of grace and lightness despite the considerable diameter and simple cylindrical outline, give one the gratifying surprise of discovering beauty where only bizarrerie was expected. From the summit, reached by a wearying climb of nearly three hundred steps, two things can be well appreciated, namely, the rare beauty of the Pisan mountain landscape, and the dizzying overhang that fourteen feet out of the perpendicular gives a tower only thirteen times that many feet high.

Turning from the campanile we may enter the cathedral by the old bronze doors of Bormanus, with their quaint picturing of Bible stories. Or we may walk the quiet outer length of the great building and enter by one of the later but still respectably old bronze doors of the splendid façade. This is one of the most beautiful church fronts in Italy. Its beauty comes not alone from the majestic lines, the decorating galleries, and the wealth of colored columns, but as well from the richness of the very stone itself. The whole cathedral is built of white marble, interspersed by lines and bars of black and greenish. Perhaps, indeed, the most beautiful memory of Pisa's duomo and tower and baptistry is that of their white walls glowing like old ivory under the sun of early morning or late afternoon. With the purple and lavender of the mountains behind them they make an ineffaceable picture.

Within the cathedral the impression is one of

beauty and spaciousness. The church is more than three hundred feet long by one hundred feet wide, and contains a forest of antique columns, booty of conquest. The choir is impressive, the nave is high and flat-ceilinged, and the aisles vaulted. There are pictures by Sodoma, Andrea del Sarto, and others, and sculptures and carving by Giovanni da Bologna, Matteo Civitali, and Giovanni Pisano. This Pisano was the son of that more famous Niccolò, sculptor of the Baptistry pulpit, and Pisa's greatest native name in the history of art. In the dome and elsewhere there are some old mosaics by Cimabue and his followers, and, hanging by its long chain, the great bronze lamp whose pendulum swinging meant, if tradition be true, so much to Galileo.

The Baptistry, like the Duomo, is all marble. It has a superb domed top, and an ornamentation of gallery and columns like that of the tower and cathedral. It is nearly two hundred feet high, with a diameter half as great, and stands in complete isolation, a condition permitting all of its grandeur and beauty to reveal themselves.

The Baptistry contains Niccolò Pisano's earliest and greatest triumph, the carved pulpit familiar by picture and description to every student of the Italian Renaissance. For this pulpit, carved in 1260, was almost the first tangible expression of the new feeling and manner. The sculptor's other famous pulpit, that in the cathedral at Siena (wrought with the help of his son Giovanni and certain students) was done seven or eight years later.

Besides the pulpit, the beautiful great marble font,

seven hundred years old, is the principal object of interest in the wide, high, echoing room. Of a sudden a sonorous ringing harmony of tones sweeps down from the great hollow of the dome and fills the whole space of the building with rhythmic vibration. It is as if one were hearing played a great calliope or organ of an octave's range in some mighty cavern of a thousand echoes. The caretaker, leaning carelessly against the font's edge, hardly moves his lips to do this; or rather, to stimulate the speaking walls and resonant chamber of the dome to do it.

Finally, there is still to see that strangest, most holy, and, to many persons, most beautiful glory of all the quadruple group, the Campo Santo: low arcaded quadrangle, built around its plot of holy soil, brought in fifty shiploads from Jerusalem. The quadrangle has, roundly, four hundred feet of length and one hundred and fifty of width, and both without and within has a continuous arcade or cloister. These arcades are a wonderful gallery of frescoes and old sculptures. Many of the frescoes are fading badly, but of some both the lines and colors are still well preserved. There is much uncertainty concerning the authorship of these fourteenth and fifteenth century frescoes, especially of the most interesting ones, such as *The Triumph of Death*, with its strange fancies of conception, and *The Last Judgment*, with its masterly execution of figures. The whole series on the north wall is definitely ascribed, however, to Benozzo Gozzoli, and several pictures in it reveal much of the joy and grace of this artist's

work in the little chapel of the Medici palace (Palazzo Riccardi) in Florence.

There are three chapels attached to the quadrangle, which also contain some frescoes and tombs. And there are various curiosities that one looks at with interest, among them the great chains that closed the ancient harbor of Pisa against enemies. But more than curiosities, sculptures, and frescoes, one sees and feels and surrenders to the peace and ancientness and persisting religious faith of this sanctuary of old bones and holy soil. It is an artistic expression of belief that makes an almost irresistible appeal. To be sure, the day and one's own mood of the moment count for much in the matter. Under a soft, clear sky, with the glancing light of the sun touching the green inclosure and the old grave-stones under foot; alone, and glad to be alone and quiet; then the Campo Santo is all beauty and rest.

This ended our excursion. We went back to Florence and to the little villa on the hill-side by the straightest way. That is, directly up the Arno, past Empoli and Signa. This way is some twenty miles shorter than that by Lucca and Pistoja. When we got in sight of the big red *orcio* on the villa roof our homecoming greetings began. Marina was waving and smiling to us from the roof, Beppi from the road, and Maria from the gate. And we soon convinced ourselves of what seemed the certain conviction of the servants, that we had had a providential return from a long and hazardous and wonderful journey, which had extended over an inde-



terminable period of time. The candles, which had been steadily burning in the little shrine on the house-corner for our safe-keeping, were nearly burned out, and the soup only awaited serving. It was the highest of high time for our returning.

## CHAPTER XXI

### BOOKS ABOUT FLORENCE

**P**OOOR over-written Florence! Not at all. It is simply a matter of interest. Can there be an over-interest in Florence? Can there be too many people wanting to come to see it, and feel it: people needing, therefore, some kind of guiding hand to and through and round about it? Florence, and what it stands for, and most beautifully reveals, are an abiding interest with a great many people, and so it is much written about. It would not be if the books were not wanted.

Some of them are better than others; some are very good, some just good, some poor; I suppose some are downright bad. But I am no judge of books, perhaps: certainly no hanging judge, like George Moore, for example. “‘Diana of the Crossways,’” says Moore—of course, this is not a book about Florence; it is just an example of the way a hanging judge executes a book—“‘Diana of the Crossways,’” says Moore, in the “Confessions of a Young Man,” “I liked better [than “Rhoda Fleming”], and had I had absolutely nothing to do I might have read it to the end.”

But I am not a young man, and my account of the books about Florence, which is not an account

at all, but simply the naming of some titles with the swiftest and most casual of annotations, will contain no such spicy judgments as Moore's. This list is only introduced with the thought of giving a little matter-of-fact help to the inquiring actual or the dreaming possible first-tripper. Our own pressing need of orientation when we first came to try to see and know a little of Florence made us pay some special attention to the book-guides, and this need will certainly be that of others in our place.

It would be of a certain interest to try a rough classification of the books about Florence. But it is hardly necessary for such a slight performance as this. One might group these book-guides into the "regulars," as Baedeker, Murray, Meyer, Hare, Horner, Grant Allen (with apologies to the shade of that pridefully irregular regular!),—the "Walks in Florence," "Talks in Florence," "Literary Landmarks of Florence," "Mornings in Florence," "Masterpieces of Florence," and the several just Florences: and into the "irregulars," or specials, as the "Florentine Palaces," "Florentine Heraldry," "Florence of Landor," "Florence of the Brownings," "Echoes of Old Florence," "Legends of Florence," "Dante and His Beloved City," and the like. Then there are the standard treatises on art, as the books of Lübke, Crowe and Cavacaselle, Berenson, and others: and the special historical and critical accounts of the art and poetry of Florence alone, its painters and sculptors, architects and poets, and the special biographies of these artists and writers.

Then there is a collection of politico-historical treatments of Florence alone, or of Tuscany, or Northern Italy, or of all Italy: and the histories of special periods, and the biographies of particular rulers, statesmen, and warriors.

There is the group of travels and sketches in Italy, with more or less description and account of Florence and Tuscany; and the group devoted to accounts of the life of the people, their temperament, and ways. And there is, finally, the group of "first impressions" of Florence and "letters" from Florence, a great group ever dying steadily at one end and growing vigorously at the other.

But not finally, either, for there is one other group, by no means to be overlooked: that one which includes "Romola," "Signa," "The Forerunner," "The Marble Faun," "Casa Guidi Windows," and the others. These are the stories and poems that have had Florence and neighboring Tuscany for their setting: books that come with refreshment and joy to the weary peruser of Talks and Walks and Echoes and Impressions. They tell more, perhaps, or at least leave more and better echoes and impressions, more vivid pictures and memories of Florence and her great ones, than any of the catalogues or manuals of the other groups.

Of all these groups, my few references are chiefly to those immediately orienting and guiding helps (written in English, or translated) that the traveler on his first visit to Florence needs in his hands, the read-as-you-walk books. But there is noted also a fair number of orienting books for the fireside

traveler to Florence. There is a certain kind of book, of which this present one of mine may be an example, which tries to be a little more than a guide in the street, but something less than a manual for the class-room; that hopes to be useful, and perhaps interesting, both to the actual visitor and those other more numerous ones that can only come in the spirit. For that group my list is more nearly complete than for any other.

The actual visitor will need to own personally some compact guide to the streets and palaces, churches and galleries; but he can easily refer to any of the other books in my list by having resort to the library facilities that Florence affords. He can do this most conveniently, perhaps, by subscribing for the term of his stay to Viesseux's circulating library (No. 5, Via Vecchieti, just off the Piazza Vittorio Emanuele; five lire a month for three books out at a time; less for one). This unusual lending library is certainly the best of its kind on the continent. The three large public libraries of Florence are the Nazionale (under the Gallery in the Uffizi Palace), the Marucelliani (Via Cavour, near the Palazzo Riccardi), and the Laurenziana (over the cloisters of San Lorenzo church). The Laurenziana contains only codices and MSS., and is limited in its use, therefore, to the scholar and bibliophile. But the other two can readily be made use of by any resident or visitor seeking current as well as older literature in Florence. The Nazionale, containing over 300,000 volumes, is open from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., and with no introduction, subscription, or

other formality than the filling out of a request blank handed one by the doorkeeper as one enters, one may obtain and consult in the reading-room any book desired. If one wishes to take books out of this library, it is necessary to fill out a blank (obtained on request to the librarian in charge of the reading-room), which needs also the indorsement of the American Consul. Books can be consulted at the excellent Marucelliana library with the same absence of difficulty. A first-class book-shop is Seeber's on the Via Tornabuoni.



## LIST OF BOOKS ABOUT FLORENCE

(Only books or translations in English are included; dates are usually of last editions; English editions of American books, and *vice versa*, are usually not noted.)

*Addison, Julia de Wolf*: THE ART OF THE PITTI PALACE.  
(1904, Boston.)

A brief history of the palace and of the Pitti family, and a good account, descriptive, historical, and critical, of the pictures. Illustrated.

*Allen, Grant*: THE EUROPEAN TOUR. (1899, London.)

Chapters 13 and 14 about Florence; lively reading for a guide-book; nearly as positive and insistent as Ruskin.

*Allen, Grant*: FLORENCE. (1906, London.)

Grant Allen's Florence is exclusively the pictures in Florence.

*Anderson, Isabella M.*: TUSCAN FOLKLORE AND SKETCHES.  
(1905, London.)

Music, folk lore, bits of Tuscan life, three literary sketches, and a couple of translated bits of Ada Negri.

*Anonymous*: IN A TUSCAN GARDEN. (1902, London.)

Account of garden, household incidents, and experience with servants; autumn and winter in Tuscany; as much about other things as about the garden.

ARTISTICAL GUIDE TO FLORENCE. (1909, Florence.)

*Berenson, Bernh.*: FLORENTINE PAINTERS OF THE RENAISSANCE. (1904, New York.)

"Florentine painting between Giotto and Michel Angelo contains the names of such artists as Orcagna,

Masaccio, Fra Filippo, Pollaiuolo, Verrochio, Leonardo, and Botticelli. Put beside these the greatest names in Venetian art, the Vivarini, the Bellini, Giorgione, Titian, and Tintoretto. The difference is striking. The significance of the Venetian names is exhausted with their significance as painters. Not so with the Florentines. Forget that they were painters, they remain great sculptors; forget that they were sculptors, and still they remain architects, poets, and even men of science."

*Blashfield, Edwin H. and Evangeline W.*: ITALIAN CITIES, 2 vols. (1903, New York.)

Beautiful color sketches and good reading; in volume I about 85 pages of Florence and in volume II 25 pages; all interesting.

*Brown, J. Wood*: THE BUILDERS OF FLORENCE. (1907, Florence.)

An admirable account of Florentine architecture, beautifully and informingly illustrated.

*Carmichael, Montgomery*: IN TUSCANY. (1901, London.)

Interesting sketches from first-hand knowledge, of Tuscan types of people, the Tuscan language and temperament, Tuscan pallone, the Italian lottery, and several towns (Pisa, Lucca, Leghorn, Volterra, La Verna, Camaldoli, Montecatini, etc.) Good reading.

*Carocci, Guido*: BYGONE FLORENCE. Translated by H. G. Huntington. (1899, Florence.)

An admirable, all too short account of the old walls and city gates, the old mint, old market, the fulling-mills, the bridges as they were, etc. Chapter XII, called "Heirlooms," points out many of the scattered relics of old Florence in the way of doorways, parts of palaces and towers still to be seen in various parts of the city.

*Cartwright, Julia*: THE PAINTERS OF FLORENCE. (1901, London.)

Twenty-eight Florentine artists, told about, in a way.

*Cellini, Benvenuto*: AUTOBIOGRAPHY (translated by J. A. Symonds, London), and TREATISES ON GOLDSMITHING AND SCULPTURE (translated by C. R. Ashbee, 1899, London).

Two highly entertaining books.

*Cole, Selina*: FIRST IMPRESSIONS OF FLORENCE. (1906, Liverpool.)

Not worse than usual.

*Crawford, Mabel*: LIFE IN TUSCANY. (1859, London.)

The people, their manners, religion, society; Florentine scenes and amusements; Viareggio and Montecatini. Interesting.

*Crowe, J. A., and Cavalcaselle, G. B.*: A NEW HISTORY OF PAINTING IN ITALY, 3 vols. (1864-1866, London.)  
Standard.

*Cruttwell, Maude A.*: A GUIDE TO THE PAINTINGS IN THE CHURCHES AND MINOR MUSEUMS OF FLORENCE. (1908, London, and New York.)

Catalogue, and quotations from Vasari.

*Deecke, W.*: ITALY, A POPULAR ACCOUNT OF THE COUNTRY, ITS PEOPLE AND ITS INSTITUTIONS. Translated by H. A. Nesbitt. (1904, London.)

Geography, geology, climate, hydrography, plants and animals, people, political institutions, church. Especially strong on topography, geography, and geology.

*Gardner, Ed. G.*: THE STORY OF FLORENCE. (1901, London.)

Good compact history and general guide.

*Goff, R. C. and Clarissa: FLORENCE AND SOME TUSCAN CITIES.* (1905, London.)

A collaboration of painter husband and writer wife, the husband contributing the more interesting part of the book; reproductions in color of paintings of churches, interiors, bridges, scenes in Florence, Prato, Pistoja, Lucca, Pisa, and Viareggio.

*Hare, A. J. C., and Baddley, St. Clair: FLORENCE,* seventh edition. (1907, London.)

The most compactly complete handbook of Florence. The quotations make it also a library of criticism and of epigram and poetry, with Florence and things Florentine for subject.

*Harwood, Edith: NOTABLE PICTURES IN FLORENCE.* (1905, London, and New York.)

A list of the more notable pictures of eighty-nine artists, arranged under the artists' names, telling where the pictures are, and giving bits of history and critical estimates of them, and bits of biography of the artists. Useful.

*Hewlett, Maurice: THE ROAD IN TUSCANY,* 2 vols. (1904, London.)

Chapter VII of Volume I is a delightful impressionistic sketch of Florence. Chapter XII is a clever attack on the making of galleries by taking pictures out of their setting and assembling them; as in the Uffizi, where there are "leagues of imprisoned pictures torn, all of them, from their sometime homes and flowering places and pinned to these walls. The Uffizi may be considered as one vast shambles where 2000 Madonnas and 2000 Bimbi are strangling each other." In Volume I are accounts of Lucca, Pistoja, Prato; in Volume II is an account of Pisa.

*Hewlett, Maurice*: EARTHWORK OUT OF TUSCANY. (1907, London.)

Beautiful; the best of Hewlett's writing, say many. "I, a northern image maker, have set up my conceits of their informing spirits, of the spirits of themselves, their soil, and the fair works that they accomplished."

*Hooker, Katherine*: WAYFARERS IN ITALY. (1902, New York.)

A chapter called "Sojourning in Florence" gives a chatty personal account of a short stay.

*Horner, Susan and Johanna*: WALKS IN FLORENCE, 2 vols. (1884, London.)

The most elaborate and detailed Florence guide.

*Howells, W. D.*: TUSCAN CITIES. (Many editions; it is in Tauchnitz.)

In it a delightful and informing chapter, "A Florentine Mosaic."

*Hutton, Edward*: FLORENCE AND NORTHERN TUSCANY. (1907, London.)

A literary guide-book; information, and appreciation with some floridity of style; beautifully illustrated; interesting and useful.

*Hutton, Edward*: COUNTRY WALKS ABOUT FLORENCE. (1908, London.)

The only thing in English covering the ground (Carocci; "Dintorni di Firenze," 2 vols., unfortunately not translated, is the really complete account); with map and illustrations. Useful.

*Hutton, Edward*: ITALY AND THE ITALIANS. (1902, London.)

Word sketches of Italian cities (two chapters given to Florence) and Italian life and customs.

*Hutton, Laurence:* LITERARY LANDMARKS OF FLORENCE.  
(1897, New York.)

Where Dante, Galileo, Savonarola, Alfieri, Boccaccio, Landor, the Brownings, Dickens, Mark Twain, and ninety others lived or walked or talked in Florence. Interesting and useful in trailing famous lions to their lairs.

*Hyett, Francis A.:* FLORENCE, HER HISTORY AND ART.  
(1903, London.)

A recent history by a Cambridge University man, written for the general reader because the author thinks Villari's and Napier's books are too long and scholarly and Trollope's too long and flippant.

*John, Earl of Cork and Orrery:* LETTERS FROM ITALY IN  
1754 and 1755. (1773, London.)

Letters 7 and 8 and 10 to 17, composing most of the book, are from Florence, and give an interesting and lively picture of the Florence of those days.

*Lees, Dorothy N.:* TUSCAN FEASTS AND TUSCAN FRIENDS.  
(1907, London.)

Slight sketches of festas, people, and scenes about Florence.

*Leland, Chas. Godfrey:* LEGENDS OF FLORENCE. (1895,  
London.)

Tales of the people about the churches, piazzas, bridges, palaces, etc. Very interesting.

*Lungo, Isidore del:* WOMEN OF FLORENCE. Translated  
by Mary Steegman. (1907, London.)

A study of the influence of women on Florentine history during and prior to the cinque cente.

*Lübke, Wm.:* HISTORY OF ART. (1868, London.)  
Standard.



*Machiavelli, Niccolò*: HISTORY OF FLORENCE. Translated by N. H. Thomson, 2 vols. (In seven different editions.) Standard.

*McMahon, Anna B.*: FLORENCE IN THE POETRY OF THE BROWNS. (1904, Chicago.)

"Being a selection of the poems of Robert and E. B. Browning which have to do with the history, the scenery, and the art of Florence."

*Murray, A. H. Hallam*: accompanied by H. W. Nevins and Montgomery Carmichael; SKETCHES ON THE OLD ROAD THROUGH FRANCE TO FLORENCE. (1904, London.)

Despite the heavy length of the caravan of title and author list, the book is anything but tedious. Chapters XI-XIII treat of Florence and near it.

*Napier, H. E.*: FLORENTINE HISTORY. (1864-7, 6 vols. London.)

From the beginning up to the accession of Ferdinand III, Grand Duke of Tuscany.

*Novi, Th.*: WHERE THE MASTERPIECES HANG IN THE THREE FLORENTINE GALLERIES.

Ninety-one pictures selected as masterpieces and their numbers and positions in the galleries given.

*King, Bolton, and Okey, Thos.*: ITALY TO-DAY. (1901, London.)

Interesting account of political, religious, social, industrial, and, to less extent, literary conditions of Italy.

*Oliphant, Miss*: THE MAKERS OF FLORENCE. (1883, London.)

Standard: Dante, Giotto, Arnolfo, Ghiberti, Brunelleschi, Donatello, Savonarola, and the monks of San Marco.

360      List of Books About Florence

*Perkins, C. C.*: TUSCAN SCULPTORS, 2 vols. (1864, London.)

Accounts biographic and critical.

*Perrens, F. T.*: HISTORY OF FLORENCE, 1434-1531. (1892, London.)

From the domination of the Medici to the fall of the Republic. The same author published in 1877-1883 a history of Florence from its origin to the rise of the Medici. He will publish no account of Florence after the Republic for "When Florence ceased to be a free town, a republic, a state, she ceased to have a history."

*Phillippi, A.*: FLORENCE. (No. IV in Famous Art Cities.) Translated by P. G. Konody. (1905, Florence, London, and New York.)

Many illustrations; historical and art.

*Ross, Janet*: OLD FLORENCE AND MODERN TUSCANY. (1904, London.)

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362      List of Books About Florence

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## INDEX

- Accademia, 130  
 Albertinelli, Mario, 125, 134  
 Alessandri, Palazzo, 195  
 Alfieri, 253  
 Altoviti, 164  
 Amidei, 164  
 Ammanati, 143, 154  
 Angelico, Fra, 120, 124, 134, 135,  
     177, 180, 210  
 Annunzio, Gabriele d', 17, 70  
 Arcetri, 215  
 Archeological Museum, 240, 256  
 Aretino, Spinello, 183  
 Arnolfo, 76
- Baccio d'Agnolo, 81  
 Badia, 91  
 Badia (Fiesole), 210  
 Bandinelli, B., 102, 123, 124, 140  
 Baptistry, 83  
 Barbadori, 165  
 Bardi, 166  
 Bargello, 145  
 Bartolommeo, Fra, 120, 122, 124,  
     134, 177, 336  
 Belfredelli, 165  
 Bellini, Giovanni, 120  
 Bibbiena, 305  
 Bicci, Neri dei, 173  
 Bigallo, 86  
 Boboli Gardens, 155  
 Boccaccio, 18  
 Böcklin, 212  
 Bologna, Giovanni da, 84, 102,  
     142, 143, 144, 148, 150, 229,  
     344  
 Books about Florence, 348  
 Borgherini, 164, 198
- Borghese, 163  
 Bormanus, 343  
 Botticelli, Sandro, 94, 120, 124,  
     135, 137, 155  
 "Brocca," 19  
 Browning, Mrs. E. B., 253,  
     255  
 Browning, Robert, 253  
 Bryant, 254  
 Brunelleschi, 76, 82, 101, 106,  
     108, 148, 154, 162, 211  
 Buggiano, 81  
 Buonarenti, Bernardo, 67  
 Buonarroti, 16  
 Buondelmonte, 164  
 Byron, 254
- Camaldoli (Casentino), 307  
 Campanile, 85  
 Canova, 171  
 Capponcino, 70  
 Capponi, 70, 165  
 Caprino, Meo del, 68  
 Careggi, 212  
 Carmine, 92  
 Carpaccio, 119, 124  
 Cascine, 245  
 Casentino, 290  
     Badia a Prataglia, 309  
     Bibbiena Fair, 305  
     Camaldoli, 307  
     Castles, 294, 302  
     Churches, 299  
     Conti Guidi, 294, 302  
     La Verna, 309, 312  
     Moggiona, 307  
     Poppi Castle, 302  
     Santa Maria del Sasso, 311

- Casentino:  
     Villages, 290  
     Vineyards and fields, 295  
 Castagno, Andrea del, 81, 120,  
     124, 172  
 Castel di Poggio, 201  
 Castles, 138-166  
 Cecconi, Eugenio, 136  
 Cellini, Benvenuto, 109, 124, 144,  
     148, 150, 155  
 Cenacolo of Andrea del Cas-  
     tagno, 172  
     of Andrea del Sarto, 169  
     of Domenico Ghirlandajo,  
         172  
     di Foligno, 175  
     dei Ognissanti, 172  
     of Raphael, 173  
     di San Marco, 173, 178  
     di San Salvi, 169  
 Certosa, 222  
 Chiesa, Villa, 70  
 Cigoli, 67, 86  
 Cimabue, 106, 133, 344  
 Civitali, Matteo, 150, 334, 336,  
     337, 338, 344  
 Clough, 255  
 Commodi, Andrea, 67  
 Consuma Pass, 286, 290  
 Cooper, Fenimore, 254  
 Corno, 165  
 Correggio, 122  
 Corsini, 163  
 Cosimo, Piero di, 125  
 Covoni, 213  
 Credi, Lorenzo di, 125, 135  
 Cronaca, 132, 159  
  
 Dandini, Piero, 67  
 Dante, 252  
     death mask, 149  
 Delli, Dello, 106  
 Desiderio. *See* Settignano  
 Dickens, 254  
 Dolci, Carlo, 133, 175  
 Domenico di Michelino, 81  
  
 Donatello, 81, 83, 84, 85, 109,  
     124, 132, 144, 147, 225, 321  
 Duccio, 106  
 Duomo, 76, 248  
     (Fiesole), 209  
     (Lucca), 333  
     (Pisa), 343  
     (Pistoja), 326  
 Duomo Museum, 82  
 Durer, 116, 122  
 Duse, 17, 70  
  
 Eliot, George, 253  
 Excursions from Florence, 286  
     Casentino, 290, 297  
     Castel di Poggio, 201  
     Certosa, 222  
     Consuma Pass, 286, 290  
     Fiesole, 207  
     Impruneta, 225  
     Lucca, 330  
     Malmantile, 233  
     Pisa, 340  
     Pistoja, 323  
     Prato, 315  
     Settignano, 61  
     Signa, 231  
     Vallombrosa, 286  
     Vincigliata, 201  
  
 Fabriano, Gentile da, 133  
 Farfani, Enrico, 137  
 Ferroni, 160  
 Festas, 247  
 Fiesole, Giovanni Angelico da,  
     120, 124, 134, 135, 177, 180,  
     210  
 Fiesole, 207  
     Badia, 210  
     Caves, 208  
     Duomo, 209  
     Monte Ceceri, 208  
     San Domenico, 210  
     Villas, 211  
 Fiorentino, Rosso, 129  
 Fiske, Willard, 254

- Fortezza da Basso, 152  
 Fortezza di San Giorgio, 152  
 Francia, 122  
 Frescobaldi, 165  
  
 Gaddi, Agnolo, 81, 92, 147  
 Gaddi, Taddeo, 100, 108  
 Galileo, 218, 252  
 Galleries. *See* Museums and Galleries  
 Gallo, 217  
 Gamberaia, 68  
 Gandi, 205  
 Gardens, 49  
 George Eliot, 253  
 Gerino da Pistoja, 173  
 Ghetto, 241  
 Ghiberti, 81, 83, 84, 100, 124, 148  
 Ghirlandajo, Domenico, 93, 94, 95, 104, 124, 133, 142, 160, 172  
 Ghirlandajo, Ridolfo, 321  
 Giordano, Luca, 158  
 Giorgione, 119, 124, 127  
 Giotto, 85, 100, 133  
 Girolami, 164  
 Gozzoli, Benozzo, 125, 157, 345  
 Gray, Thomas, 254  
 Gruamons, 325  
 Guarleone, 169  
 Guercino, 122  
 Guicciardini, 252  
 Guidi, 294, 302  
 Guinigi, 339  
  
 Harvest times, 269  
 Hawthorne, 19, 253  
 Hazlitt, 255  
 Holbein, 116  
 Holy fire of the Pazzi, 162, 248  
 Hotels and pensions, 3  
 Housekeeping, 12, 30  
 Hunt, Leigh, 254  
  
 Ilaria, 334  
 "Il Palagio," 212  
 Impruneta, 226  
  
 Jameson, Mrs., 254  
  
 Kauffmann, Angelica, 116  
 Kranach, 122  
  
 Lambertesca, 164  
 Landor, 19, 212, 253, 255  
 "La Primola," 213  
 La Verna (Casentino), 309, 312  
 Last Supper. *See* Cenacolo  
 Le Brun, 116  
 Lever, Charles, 254  
 Lewes, George, 253  
 Libraries, 351  
     Laurenziana, 110, 211, 351  
     Marucelliana, 351  
     Nazionale, 351  
     Viesseux, 351  
 Lippi, Filippino, 91, 92, 101, 106, 116, 124, 323  
 Lippi, Filippo, 109, 121, 124, 129, 134, 135, 321  
 Loggia dei Lanzi, 144  
 Loggia dei Rucellai, 161  
 Longfellow, 255  
 Lotti, 165  
 Lowell, 254  
 Luca van Leyden, 122  
 Lucca, 330  
     Duomo, 333  
     Piazza San Martino, 333  
     Palazzo Pretorio, 337  
     Palazzo Provinciale, 338  
     San Frediano, 336  
     San Giovanni, 336  
     San Michele, 337  
     San Romano, 337  
     Tomb of Ilaria, 334  
     Tomb of St. Zita, 337  
     Torre dei Guinigi, 339  
     Volto Santo, 334  
 Luini, 122

- Macalmont, 212  
 Machiavelli, 213, 252  
 Madonna delle Carceri (Prato),  
     319  
 Madonna dell' Umilta (Pistoja),  
     326  
 Maiano, 213  
 Maiano, Benedetto da, 81, 91,  
     106, 142, 150, 159, 184, 195  
 Malmantile, 233  
 Mann, Horace, 254  
 Mannelli, 165  
 Manni, Giannicola, 173  
 Mantegna, 119  
 Manzuoli da S. Friano, 67  
 Mark Twain, 18, 255  
 Marketing, 30  
 Marsili, 155  
 Martelli, 195  
 Masaccio, 92, 133  
 Masolino, 92, 124  
 Matsys, 2, 116  
 Medici, 211  
 Melozzo da Forli, 122  
 Memmi, Simone, 108  
 Mercato Nuovo, 232, 239, 242  
 Mercato Vecchio, 240, 241  
 Michelangelo, 16, 79, 92, 108,  
     110, 116, 121, 125, 129, 131,  
     132, 133, 141, 147, 156, 218,  
     221, 252  
 Michelozzo, 85, 100, 102, 140,  
     150, 211, 220, 229, 321  
 Millais, 116  
 Milton, 252  
 Mino da Fiesole, 91, 97, 99, 150,  
     184, 193, 210, 321  
 Misericordia, 86  
 Moggiona, 307  
 Monaco, Lorenzo, 93, 120  
 Monte San Miniato, 215  
 Morgan, 136  
 Mozzi, 166, 212  
 Murillo, 130  
 Museums and Galleries:  
     Accademia, 130  
     Museums and Galleries:  
         Archeological Museum, 240,  
         256  
         Duomo Museum, 82  
         Pitti, 127  
         Uffizi, 113  
     Ognissanti, 94, 172  
     Olive oil making, 282  
     Olivetani, 70  
     Or San Michele, 95  
     Orcagna, 95, 105, 147, 225  
     Palazzo Vecchio, 138  
     Pandolfino, 162  
     Paolo Veronese, 122  
     Parigi, 154  
     Parker, Theo., 255  
     Perugino, 102, 122, 124, 128, 134,  
         173, 181  
     Piazza del Duomo, 73, 243  
         di San Salvi, 170  
         di Santa Trinità, 160, 164  
         della Signoria, 139, 244  
         Vittorio Emanuele, 239  
     Piazzale Michelangelo, 217, 218  
     Pinturricchio, 124  
     Pisa, 340  
         Baptistry, 344  
         Campo Santo, 345  
         Chiesa di Santa Maria della  
         Spina, 342  
         Duomo, 342  
         Hunger Tower, 341  
         Leaning Tower, 342  
         Piazza dei Cavalieri, 341  
         Piazza del Duomo, 342  
         Ponte di Mezzo, 342  
     Pisano, Andrea, 84  
     Pisano, Giovanni, 321, 325,  
         344  
     Pisano, Niccolò, 344  
     Pistoja, 323  
         Baptistry, 328  
         Chiesa di Giovanni Fuorcivi-  
         tas, 325

## Pistoja:

- Chiesa di Madonna dell' Umilta, 326
- Chiesa di Sant' Andrea, 325
- Chiesa di Sant' San Francesco, 326
- Duomo, 326
- Ospedale del Ceppo, 329
- Palazzo Comunale, 328
- Palazzo Pretorio, 328
- Torre del Podestà, 328
- Pitti, 127, 139, 154
- Poggio Gherardo, 213
- Poggio Imperiale, 215
- Pollaiuolo, Antonio del, 125, 150
- Pollaiuolo, Piero del, 125
- Ponte Carraja, 247
  - alle Grazie, 4
  - Santa Trinità, 8
  - Vecchio, 6
- Poppi, 302
- Porta Romana, 215
  - San Niccolò, 201, 215
- Porzuincola, 17, 70
- Prato, 315
  - Chiesa di Madonna delle Cercheri, 319
  - Cloisters of San Francesco, 321
  - Duomo, 321
  - Palazzo Pretorio, 320
  - Pulpit of Donatello and Michelozzo, 321
  - Shrine of Via Santa Margherita, 323
- Quaratese, 162
- Quercia, Jacopo della, 150, 171, 333, 337
- Raphael, 116, 122, 123, 124, 128, 129, 130, 162, 173
- Rembrandt, 129
- Restaurants and cafés, 10
- Riccardi, 157
- Ridolfo, 165

- Robbia, Andrea della, 67, 149, 228, 319
- Robbia, Giovanni della, 329
- Robbia, Luca della, 81, 83, 86, 91, 94, 220, 228, 313
- Rogers, Samuel, 254
- Rose, Villa, 230
- Rossellino, Antonio, 65, 69, 99, 150, 185, 191, 220, 321
- Rossellino, Bernardo, 65, 69, 99, 104, 150, 185, 191, 327
- Rovezzano, Benedetto da, 91, 93, 97, 147, 164, 169, 185, 197, 288
- Rubens, 116, 122
- Rucellai, 160
- Ruggieri, 154
- Salembeni, 164
- Salvini, 19
- San Domenico di Fiesole, 210
- San Francesco (Prato), 321
- San Frediano (Lucca), 336
- San Giovanni (Lucca), 336
- San Giovanni Battista, 83
- San Giovanni Fuorcivitas (Pistoja), 325
- San Lorenzo, 108
- San Marco, 173, 175
- San Martino a Maiano, 213
- San Michele (Lucca), 337
- San Miniato, 215, 219
- San Niccolò, 201, 215
- San Romano (Lucca), 337
- San Salvatore al Monte, 219
- San Salvi, 169
- Sansovino, Jacopo, 150
- Sant' Ambrogio, 97
- Sant' Andrea (Pistoja), 325
- Sant' Apollonia, 172
- Sant' Onofrio, 173
- Santa Croce, 98
- Santa Maria a Settignano, 66
- Santa Maria a Vincigliata, 204
- Santa Maria del Fiore, 83

- Santa Maria del Sasso (Casentino), 311  
 Santa Maria della Spina (Pisa), 342  
 Santa Maria Maddalena dei Pazzi, 181  
 Santa Maria Novella, 103  
 Santa Trinità, 93  
 Santi Apostoli, 97, 248  
 Santissima Annunziata, 101  
 Santo Spirito, 101  
 Santo Stefano, 164  
 Sarto, Andrea del, 102, 116, 128, 129, 134, 169, 182, 344  
 Savonarola, 252  
     in San Marco, 179, 181  
     prison cell of, 142  
 Scalzi, 182  
 Segaloni, 91  
 Servants, 30  
 Serristori, 166  
 Settignano, Desiderio da, 64, 67, 93, 99, 109, 149, 150, 184, 189  
 Settignano, 61  
     Church of the Frati Olivetani, 70  
     Desiderio, 64  
     Piazza Niccolò Tommaseo, 66  
     Rossellini, 65, 69  
     Santa Maria, 66  
     Statue of Septimus Severus, 67  
     Tram, 61  
     Villa Capponcino, 70  
     Villa Chiesa, 70  
     Villa Gamberaia, 69  
     Villa Versé, 69  
 Shops and Shopping, 258  
 Signa, 231  
 Signorelli, Luca, 124, 134  
 Signorini, Giovanni, 102, 137  
 Silk growing, 275  
 Smollett, 254  
 Sodoma, 344  
 Sogliani, 177  
 Spagnoletto, 122  
 Spence, 212  
 Spezeria, 182  
 Spini, 160  
 Streets, life of the, 236  
 Strozzi, 158  
 Sustermans, 128, 130  
 Theaters, 250  
 Titian, 116, 119, 120, 122, 124, 129, 130  
 Torre dei Barbadori, 165  
 Torre dei Bardi, 166  
 Torre del Gallo, 217  
 Torre dei Gandi, 205  
 Torre dei Girolami, 164  
 Torre dei Lotti, 165  
 Torre dei Marsili, 165  
 Torre San Niccolò, 201, 215  
 Torre Vincigliata, 201, 203  
 Torrigiani, 166  
 Trollope, T. A., 253  
 Trollope, Mrs. T. G., 253  
 Uccello, Paolo, 81, 106, 121, 125  
 Uffizi, 113  
 Ugo da Siena, 95  
 Ussi, 136  
 Vallombrosa, 287  
 Van Dyck, 116, 122  
 Vasari, 80, 81, 124, 142, 326  
 Veronese, Paolo, 122  
 Verrochio, A., 124, 141, 150  
 Vespucci, Amerigo, 253  
 Versé, Villa, 68  
 Viale dei Colli, 217  
 Viale Machiavelli, 217  
 Viale Michelangelo, 217  
 Villas, 15, 211-214  
 Vinci, Leonardo da, 116, 121, 141  
 Vincigliata, 201  
 Viviani, 18  
 Volto Santo, 334  
 Walpole, Horace, 254  
 Watts, 116  
 Wine making, 279  
 Zuccherò, 81







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